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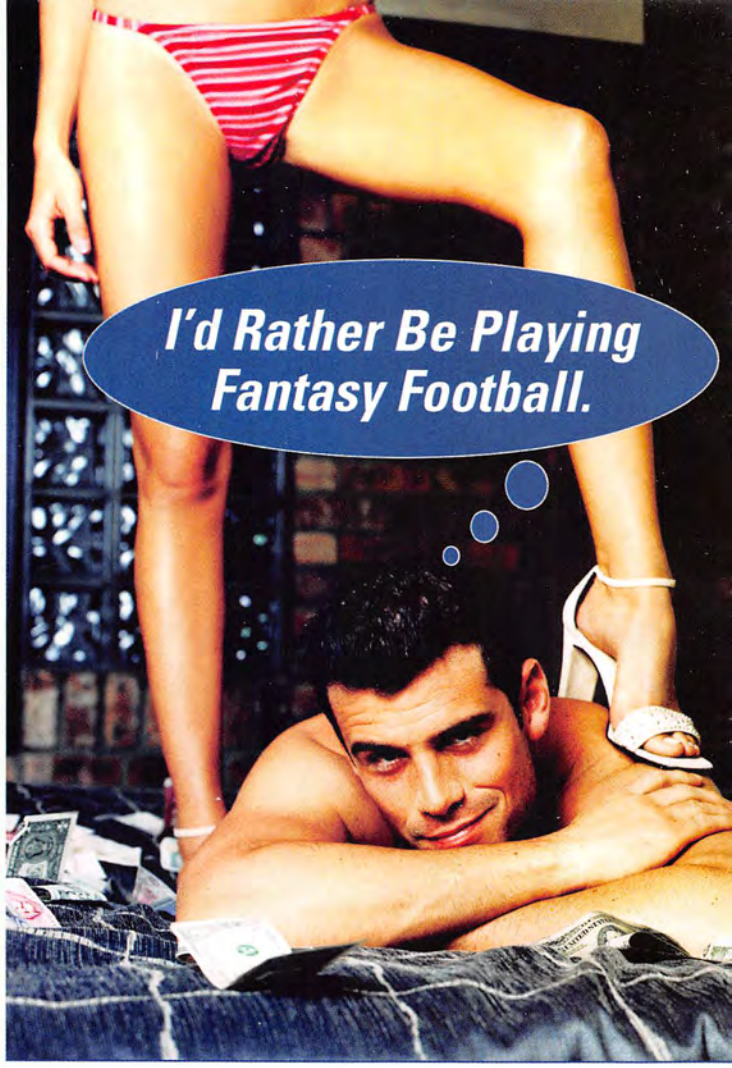

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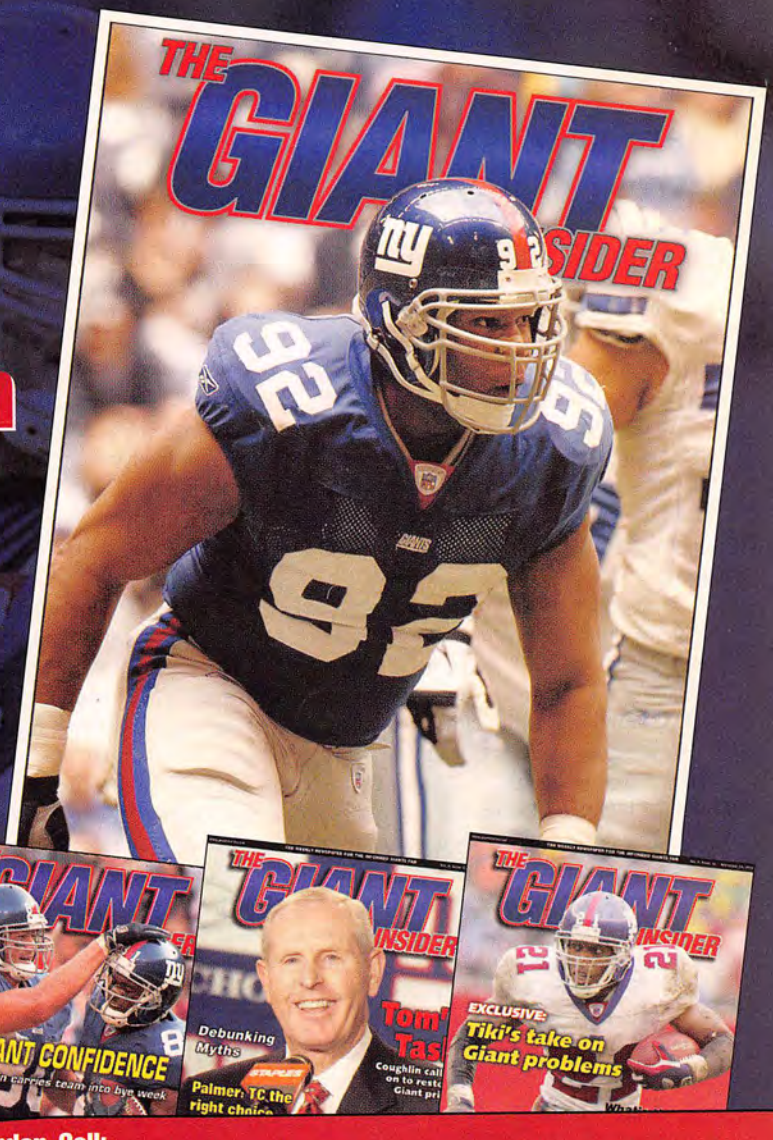

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Remembering the 'Worst of the Worst'

The very nature of *Street & Smith's* is to preview who we think are going to be the top teams for the upcoming season, the ones that have the best shot of making the playoffs and getting to experience that one shining moment at the Super Bowl.

We spend an awful lot of time arguing about which teams are most likely to get there. We don't spend a lot of time talking about the worst teams, the ones that have no chance of seeing any playoff football in January unless it's on a couch in front of a TV.

On page 20 of this issue, however, we get to spend some time with the teams regular contributor G. Scott Thomas believes are the 20 worst of all time in a story appropriately titled "The Absolute Pits."

Winning the noxious title as the "Worst of the Worst" is the 1981 Baltimore Colts, coached by Mike McCormack and quarterbacked by Bert Jones. It was a team whose defense was so pathetic that it gave up an average of 425 yards per game game.

My memories of Jones and the Colts don't revolve around that team. I best remember him leading coach Ted Marchibroda's mid-1970s Baltimore teams to three straight AFC East titles (1975-77), handing off to Lydell Mitchell or throwing deep to Roger Carr on the half-grass, half-dirt pitch of old Memorial Stadium. Those were the glory days of the NFL, if you ask me, the days when the quarterback position was so deep that Jones actually found himself in the second tier of the game's best quarterbacks. It wasn't easy back then climbing past the likes of Roger Staubach, Terry Bradshaw, Fran Tarkenton, Ken Stabler and Bob Griese.

While my image of the Colts was not that of a loser, there are many other teams from that era embedded in my memory as ever-enduring embarrassments.

I recall the pre-Walter Payton Bears, whose quarterback, Bobby Douglass, literally ran for his life in 1972, rushing (yes, rushing) for 968 yards for a 4-9-1 Chicago team. Having a 1,000-yard rusher behind center is not exactly a prescription for success in the NFL, even if your name is Michael Vick.

I remember the pre-Air (Don) Coryell/Kellen Winslow Chargers, who actually traded for a 40-year-old Johnny Unitas prior to the 1973 season and protected him long enough to have the Hall-of-Famer play five games before he went down for the season. It was later discovered that many players on the team had significant drug issues, something that probably didn't come as a big surprise to Johnny U. The sight of the great Unitas adorned in lightning bolts and surrounded by that group of losers still lingers.

I wince at the thought of the pre-Steve Bartkowski Falcons, who got about two minutes to celebrate their first 1,000-yard running back Dec. 17, 1972, only to see Dave Hampton go out and lose six yards on his next carry and finish the season with 995 yards.

And, of course, I remember the poor New Orleans Aints, whose quarterback, Archie Manning, would go on to sire two of the best QBs of the 21st century but whose elusive scrambling ability could only be stretched so far on a team with talent that always seemed to be about five notches below everyone else's. Those Aints, whose fans wore bags over their heads at games, epitomized just how bad a professional sports team can get. During Archie's years in New Orleans (1971-82), he never enjoyed a winning season.

One of those Manning sons, Eli, arrives in New York this season to help rescue a hapless 4-12 Giants team, one that's probably a tad better than some of the Saints teams his dad played on. Thanks to Eli, the salary cap and the NFL's never-ending fight to bring total parity, they won't be hapless for long.

That's something today's NFL fans can depend on. Yesterday's NFL fans could always depend on some real smelly dogs come December.

• • •

Welcome to the 2004 edition of *Street & Smith's Pro Football*. In addition to the above-mentioned feature on the worst teams of all time, regular contributor David Sweet goes in-depth on two timely subjects: the decision NFL coaches have now on when, where and how to go for the two-point conversion ("To go—or not to go," page 12) and how the quarterbacks aren't as important in the game as they used to be ("Sleeper cell," page 16). In addition to our extensive look back at the NFL Draft (page 26) and a look forward to your Fantasy Draft (page 32), you'll also find the only preview of the Canadian Football League you'll see among the preseason yearbooks (page 186), plus Targets and team-by-team previews that this year feature our writers' choices for each franchise's top three all-time quarterbacks.

Scott Smith
Editor

on deck:
Street & Smith's **National College Football** on sale June 2004
Street & Smith's **College Football South** on sale June 2004
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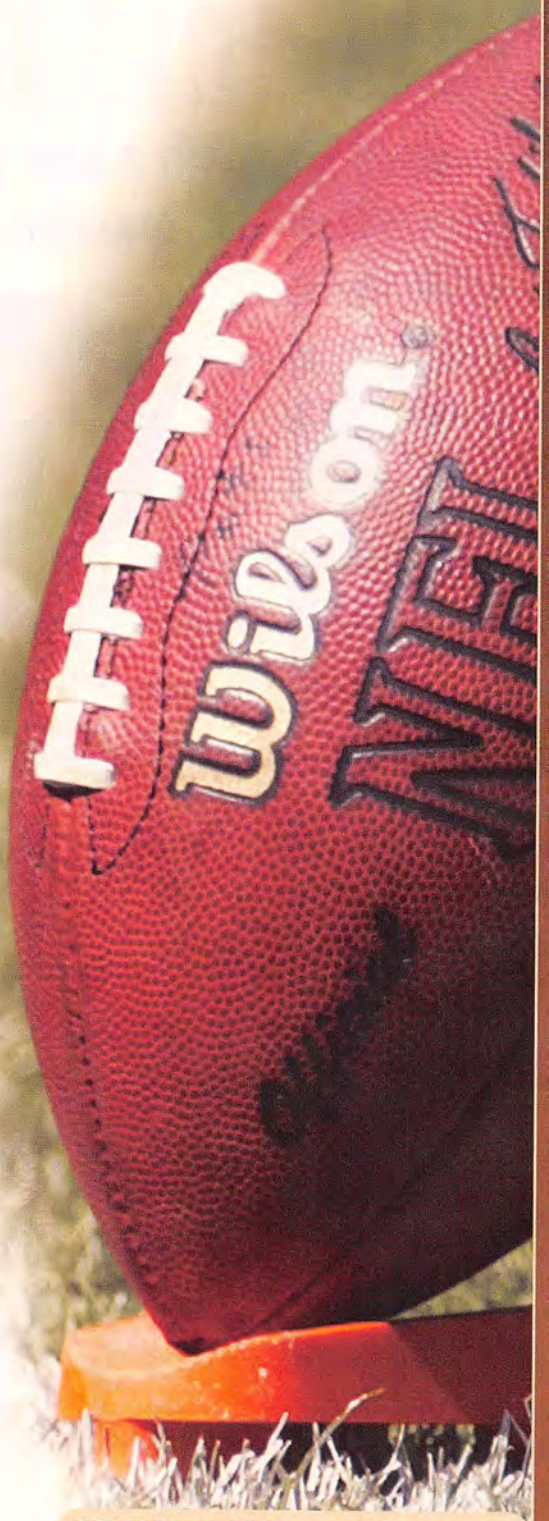

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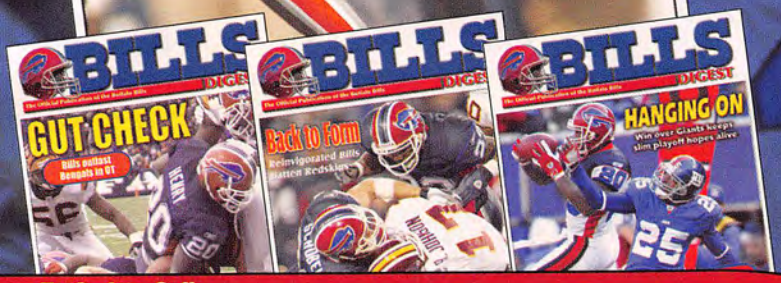

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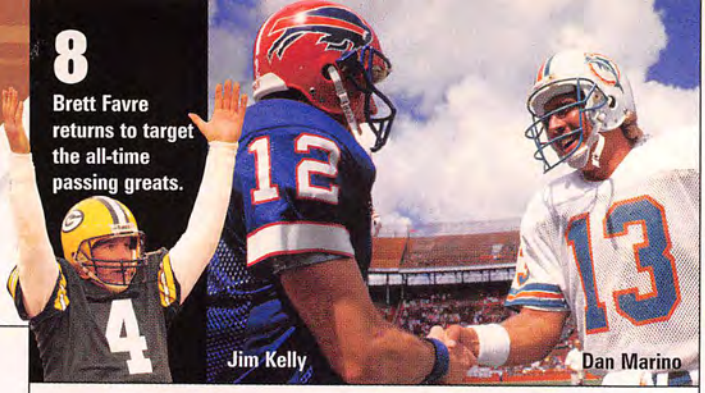

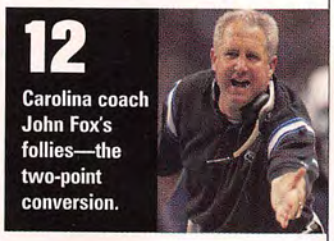

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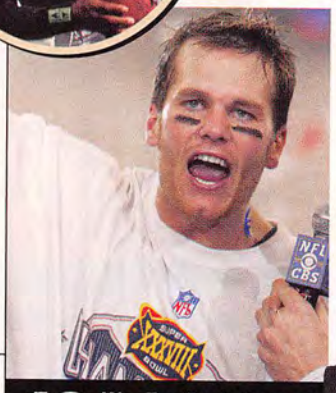
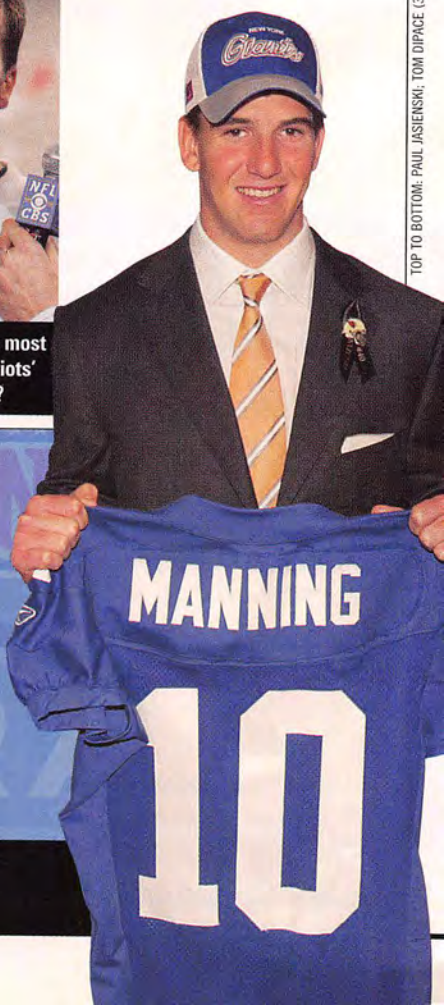
Street & Smith's ranks each NFL franchise's top three QBs of all time. See team previews.





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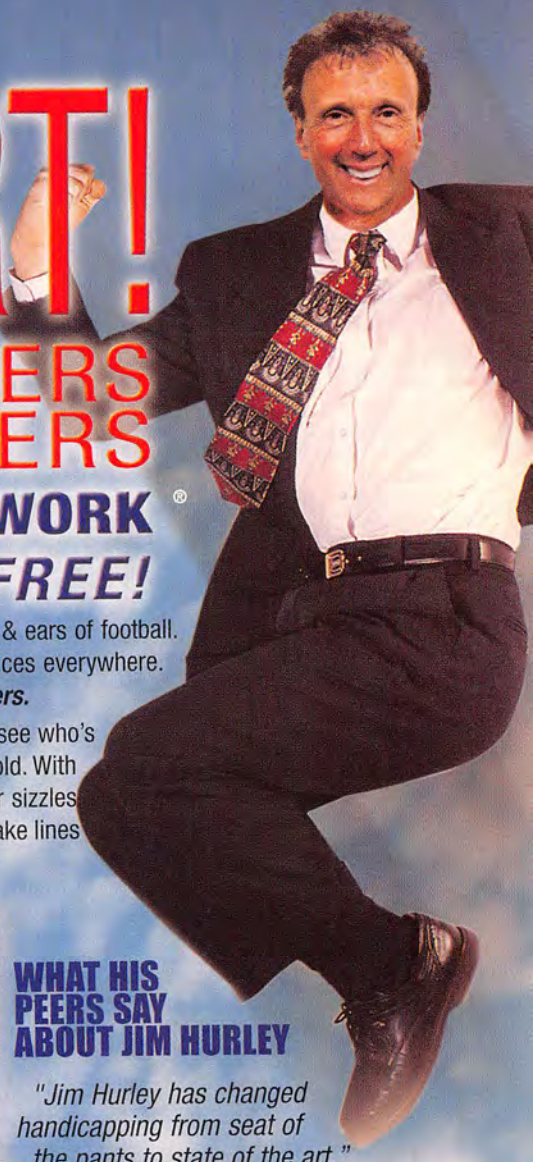

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COLLEGE GAME OF THE YEAR

LAST YEAR: Calif (-3½) over So Miss 34-2 WON

BACK TO SCHOOL PARLAY

LAST YEAR:

Okla St (-20) Wyoming	48-24	WON
Bost Coll (+9½) Penn St	27-14	WON

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VINNY TESTAVERDE	40,943
Joe Montana	40,551
Johnny Unitas	40,239
Dave Krieg	38,147
Boomer Esiason	37,920
DREW BLEDSOE	36,876
Jim Kelly	35,467
Jim Everett	34,837
Jim Hart	34,665
Steve DeBerg	34,241
John Hadl	33,503
Phil Simms	33,462
Steve Young	33,124
Troy Aikman	32,942
Ken Anderson	32,838
Sonny Jurgensen	32,224
John Brodie	31,548
Norm Snead	30,797
Randall Cunningham	29,979
Joe Ferguson	29,817
Roman Gabriel	29,444
Len Dawson	28,711
Y.A. Tittle	28,339
RICH GANNON	28,219
Ron Jaworski	28,190
CHRIS CHANDLER	28,021
Terry Bradshaw	27,989
Ken Stabler	27,938
Craig Morton	27,908
Joe Namath	27,663
Jeff George	27,602
George Blanda	26,920
Steve Grogan	26,886
Bobby Layne	26,768
KERRY COLLINS	26,383
Jim Harbaugh	26,288
Jim Plunkett	25,882
MARK BRUNELL	25,793
Joe Theismann	25,206
Ken O'Brien	25,094
Bob Griese	25,092
PEYTON MANNING	24,885
Tommy Kramer	24,777
Bart Starr	24,718

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Dan Marino	4,967
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Warren Moon	3,988
BRETT FAVRE	3,960
Fran Tarkenton	3,686
Joe Montana	3,409
VINNY TESTAVERDE	3,334
Dan Fouts	3,297
DREW BLEDSOE	3,193
Dave Krieg	3,105
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Troy Aikman	2,898
Steve DeBerg	2,874
Jim Kelly	2,874
Jim Everett	2,841
Johnny Unitas	2,830
Steve Young	2,667
Ken Anderson	2,654
Jim Hart	2,593
Phil Simms	2,576
RICH GANNON	2,492
John Brodie	2,469
Sonny Jurgensen	2,433
Randall Cunningham	2,429
Joe Ferguson	2,369
Roman Gabriel	2,366
John Hadl	2,363
Jim Harbaugh	2,305
Jeff George	2,298
CHRIS CHANDLER	2,293

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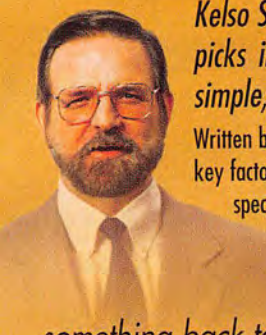

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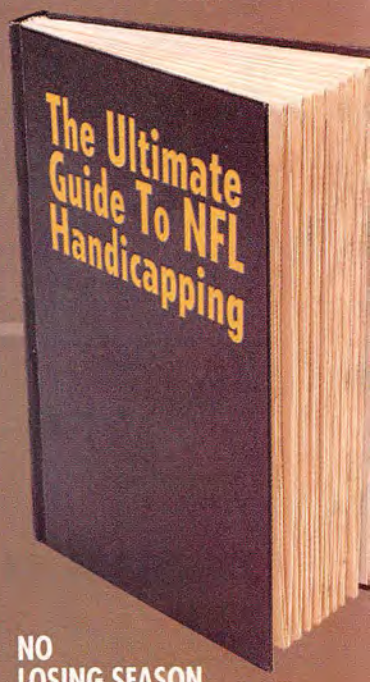

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KERRY COLLINS 2,235
MARK BRUNELL 2,196
Ron Jaworski 2,187
Len Dawson 2,136
PEYTON MANNING 2,128
Y.A. Tittle 2,118
Ken O'Brien 2,110
BRAD JOHNSON 2,101
Craig Morton 2,053
Joe Theismann 2,044
Terry Bradshaw 2,025
Tommy Kramer 2,012
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Brian Sipe 1,944
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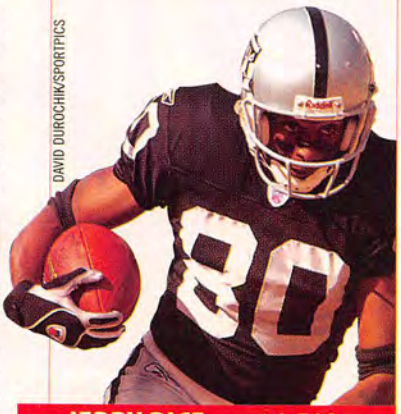

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Charley Taylor 9,110
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Harold Carmichael 8,985
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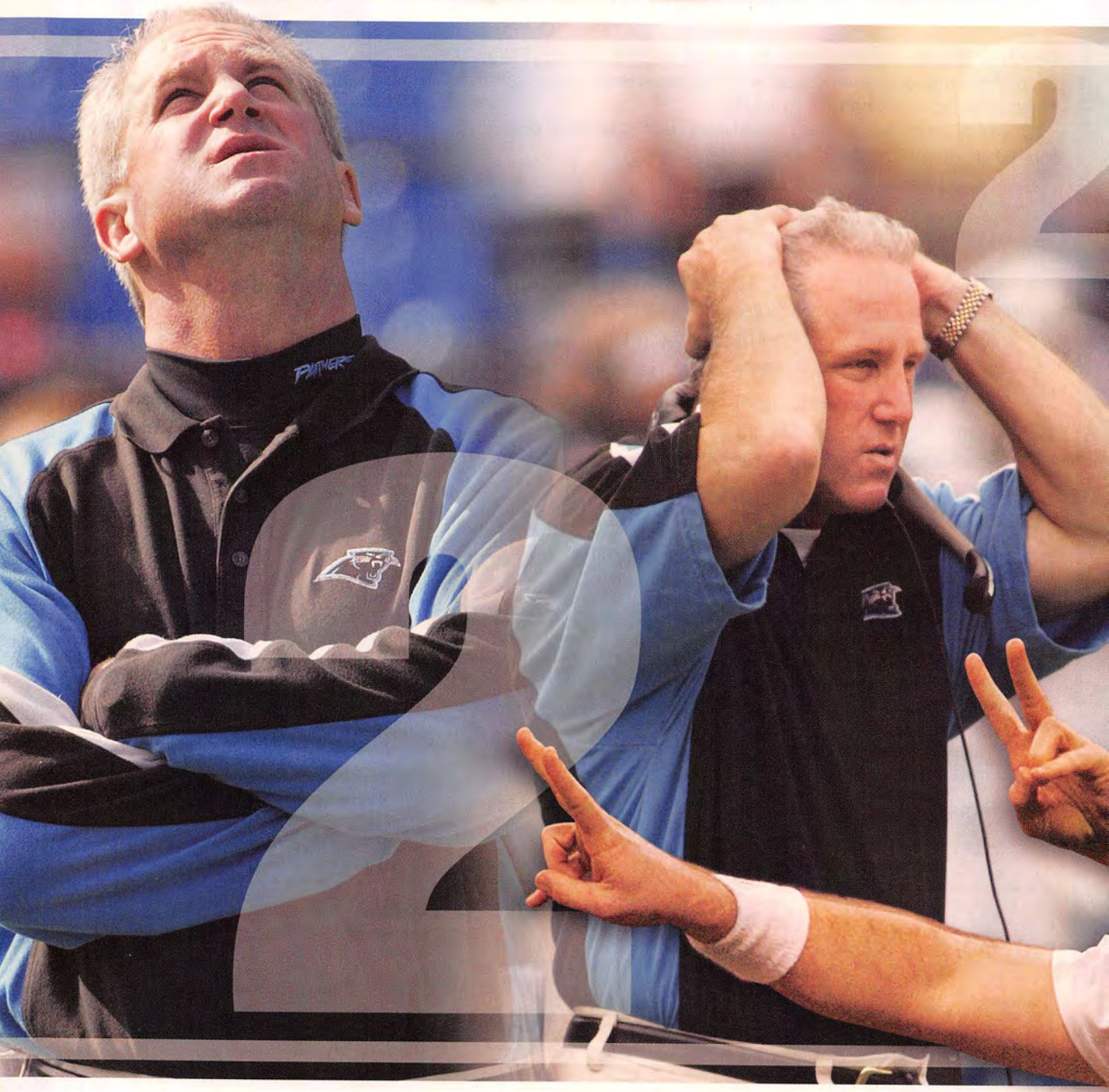
SS04

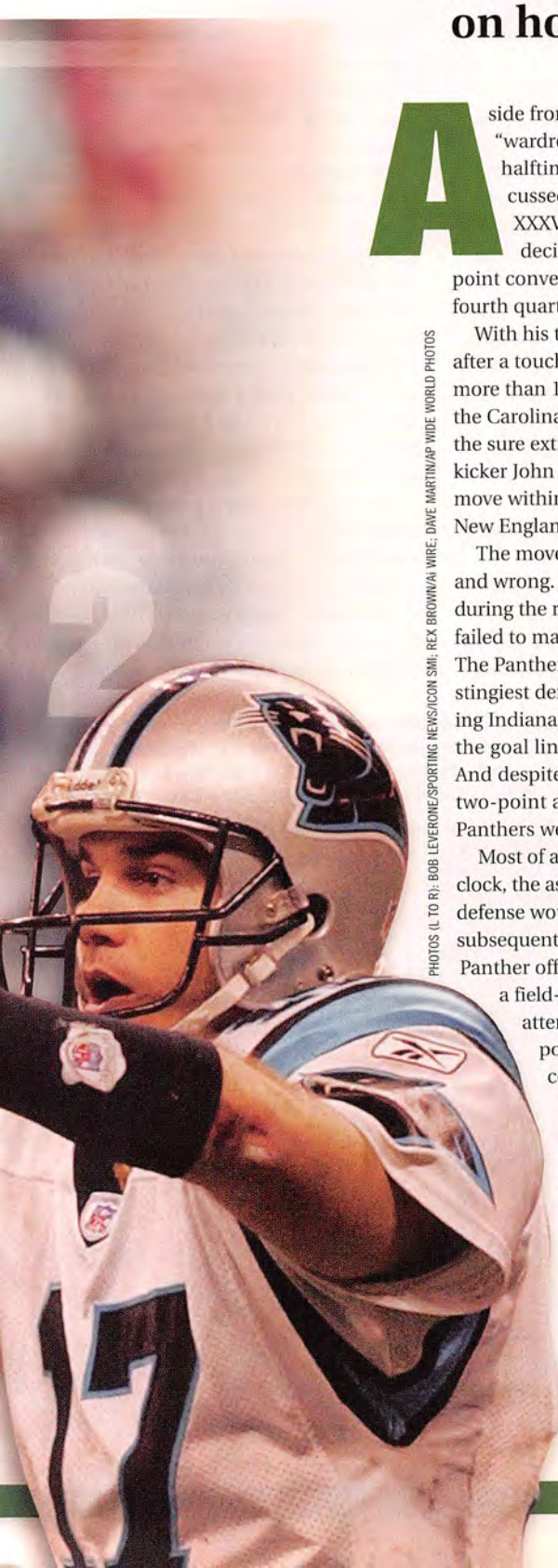
TO GO—

By DAVID SWEET



OR NOT TO GO

Ten years after the introduction of the two-point conversion, NFL coaches like Carolina's John Fox (see: Super Bowl) still don't seem to have a firm handle on how to use the deuce.



PHOTOS (L TO R): BOB LEVERONE/SPORTING NEWS/ICON SMI; REX BROWN/AI WIRE; DAVE MARTIN/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

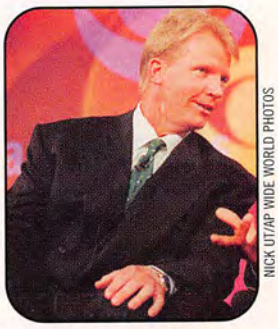
Aside from Janet Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction" at halftime, the most discussed move of Super Bowl XXXVIII was John Fox's decision to go for a two-point conversion early in the fourth quarter.

With his team down 21-16 after a touchdown—and with more than 12 minutes to play—the Carolina coach shunned the sure extra point from kicker John Kasay to try to move within a field goal of New England.

The move was surprising—and wrong. In three attempts during the regular season, Carolina had failed to make a two-point conversion. The Panthers were facing the league's stingiest defense, one well-known for stuffing Indianapolis four times in a row near the goal line in a regular-season game. And despite percentages favoring running two-point attempts over passing tries, the Panthers went to the air.

Most of all, with so much time left on the clock, the assumption that the Carolina defense would stop New England on its subsequent possessions and that the Panther offense would have no more than a field-goal opportunity during its attempts was absurd. Indeed, 24 points were scored after the unsuccessful two-point conversion.

Ten years after the NFL adopted the two-point conversion, head coaches—many considered intelligent and cutting-edge otherwise—still seem baffled over when and how to use it. Commentators and columnists lambasted Fox for his decision, from Phil Simms seconds after the fact on CBS to Russell Levine in his "Confessions of a Football Junkie" column for *footballoutsiders.com*.



NICK UT/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

CBS NFL analyst Phil Simms was highly critical of Carolina coach John Fox's decision to go for two early in the fourth quarter against New England in the Super Bowl.

"Coaches need to get into the mind-set that a two-pointer when trailing is a desperate play," Levine says. "In general, behind by less than three scores, I don't think teams should go for two outside of the last half of the fourth quarter."

Said Simms: "You don't go for two-point conversions with 12:40 left in the game. You don't risk a guaranteed point when there are many more possessions left in regulation. John Fox going for two points changed the game around, and it might've been the difference in the outcome."

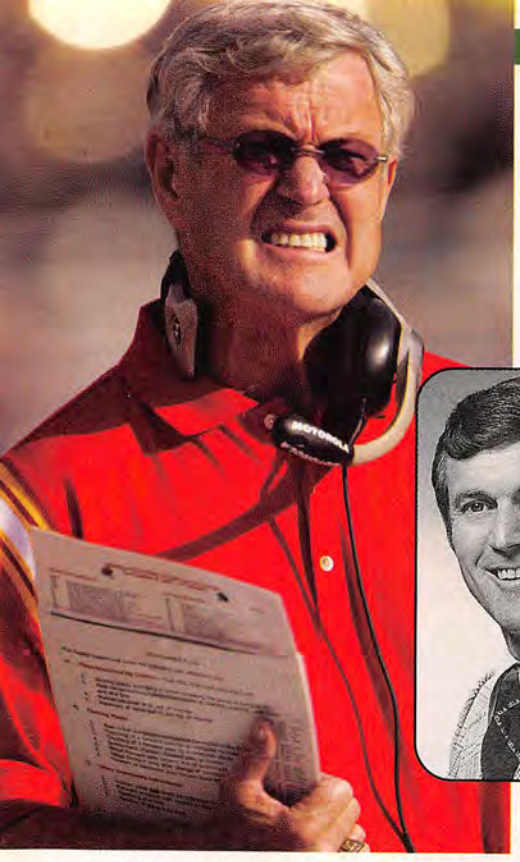
Two-point usage dropping

Perhaps coaches' lack of comfort with the two-point conversion, combined with their generally conservative nature, has prompted its steady decrease in use. In 1994, the year it was introduced, 116 two-point attempts were successful during the regular season, still the highest ever.

The lowest amount? This past season, when only 66 attempts were converted, 18 fewer than the previous season low.

That record-setting 1994 season also saw a 51-percent success rate that has not been matched since, perhaps because defenses are better prepared for the play. After hitting a low of 37-percent success in the 1999 season, two-point conversions have averaged a 44-percent success rate since. The extra point, by contrast, was good more than 95 percent of the time during the 2003 season.

"I don't think teams in general have been as successful as they initially thought they would be," says Cleveland Browns coach Butch Davis, who had experience making the two-point decision upon entering the NFL in 2001 after six years as head coach at the University of Miami.



Credit for the two-point conversion chart goes to Kansas City coach Dick Vermeil when he was an assistant at UCLA 30 years ago (inset).

ABOVE: ROB TRINGALI/SPORTSCHROME; COURTESY UCLA SPORTS INFORMATION

"Most teams probably thought the success ratio would be higher. Teams are taking the sure point rather than going for a more-risky two points. People don't seem to be going for two unless they absolutely have to."

One wonders if former college coaches such as Davis and another former Miami coach, San Francisco's Dennis Erickson, have an advantage using the play once they become head coaches in the pros? Levine doesn't think so.

"The two-pointer gets so mangled in college because of the competitive imbalance that exists," he says. "If you're Florida playing Louisiana Tech, and you miss an early extra point, you might well go for two the next time because the thought of a close game is not even in the coach's mind-set. College coaches tend to stick to the straight 'chart method' (if leading by 12, go for two) no matter what."

Says Green Bay offensive coordinator Tom Rossley: "I know in the NFL you prepare more than you do in college. In college you have one play and you draw up something if you need a second one. We go into every game (in the NFL) with at least three two-point plays."

Charting success

Just as amateur blackjack players can check a card to see whether they should take a hit on 12, football coaches can assess the odds of going for a two-point conversion by using the chart method. Credit for the chart's invention goes to Kansas City coach Dick Vermeil when he was an assistant at UCLA 30 years ago. If a team is down anywhere from one to 20 points, the chart suggests going for two in eight instances, a large number for a move that succeeds less than half the time.

Fox mentioned the chart when defending his call to go for two.

A staple in the old American Football League—it was adopted in January 1960, only two days after the league named its first president, Lamar Hunt—the two-point conversion had always been looked upon as a gimmick by the "No Fun League." After all, in a game comfortable with 7s and 3s, it possessed the same number of points as that rarest of scores, the safety. Even worse, the name itself was strange. Wasn't "conversion" more applicable to religion than football?

But much like the National Basketball Association, which only adopted the American Basketball Association's three-point line years after its merger with the league, the NFL—pushed by old AFL owners such as Kansas City's Hunt—finally relented.

"The most difficult obstacle was the coaches, because they didn't want to have to think about the possibility of losing a game on a two-pointer," Hunt says. "But the games are intended to be entertaining, and the two-point play fits perfectly. Years ago, the Chiefs trailed a team by 16 points and scored two eight-point touchdowns to tie the score, only to turn around and lose the game on a field goal. It was quite an exciting game (because of the two-point conversion)."

Despite the Chiefs' defeat, the two-point conversion has sparked a few comeback victories in the NFL, but none as memorable as the 49ers' 39-38 win over the New York Giants in the 2002 NFC playoffs. Down 38-14 to the visiting Giants near the end of the third quarter, the 49ers scored two touchdowns and successfully converted the two-point attempts, thanks to catches by wide receiver Terrell Owens, to pull within eight points. They eventually scored one more touchdown and a field goal to pull off the second-biggest playoff comeback in NFL history.

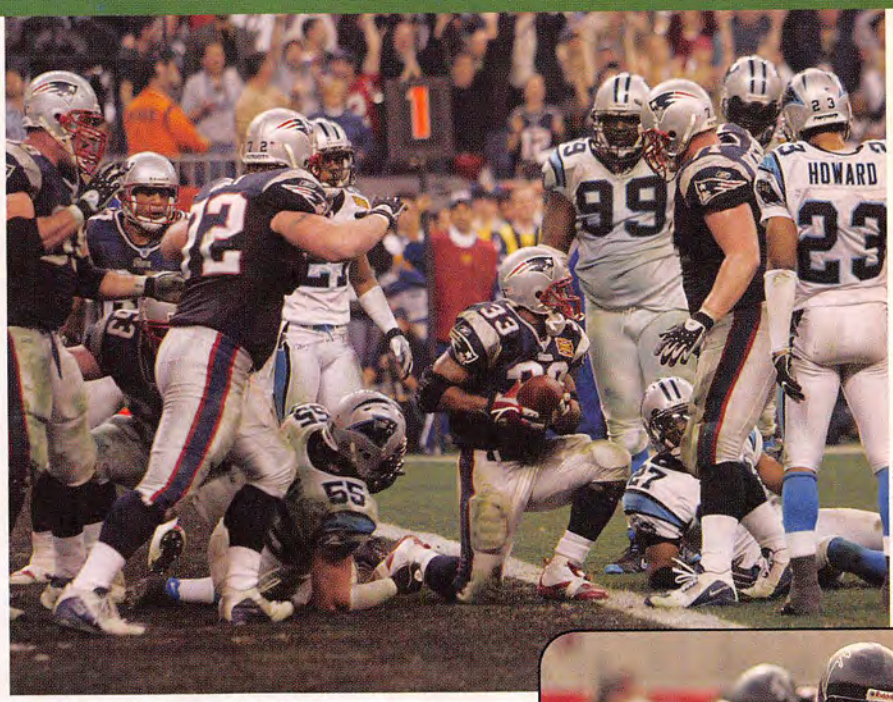
The new scoring opportunity made a bizarre NFL debut in '94. The first two-point conversion in league history was scored by a punter, Tom Tupa for Cleveland. And despite its first-year success rate of 51 percent, it plunged to 38 percent (the second-lowest number on record) the next season.

Representatives from the American Football League which adopted the two-point conversion rule. Front row (l to r): Robert L. Howsam, Denver; Max Winter, Minneapolis-St. Paul; league founder Lamar Hunt (holding ball), Dallas; and K.S. Adams Jr., Houston. Back row (l to r): Barron Hilton, Los Angeles; Ralph C. Wilson Jr., Buffalo; and Harry Wismer, New York.

AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

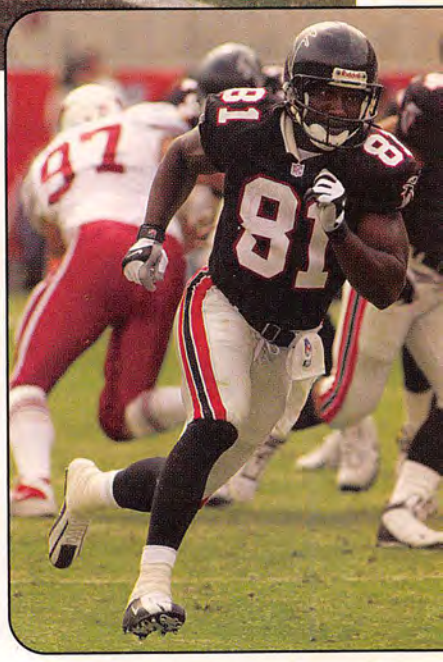
MICHAEL ZITO/SPORTSCHROME

Terrell Owens' big catches on two-point conversions helped the 49ers pull off the second-biggest playoff comeback in NFL history vs. the Giants in 2002.



JAMES D. SMITH/ICON SMI

New England's Kevin Faulk (33) converted a two-point conversion in the Super Bowl by doing something that many observers say should be tried more–running it in.



JARED DORT/ICON SMI

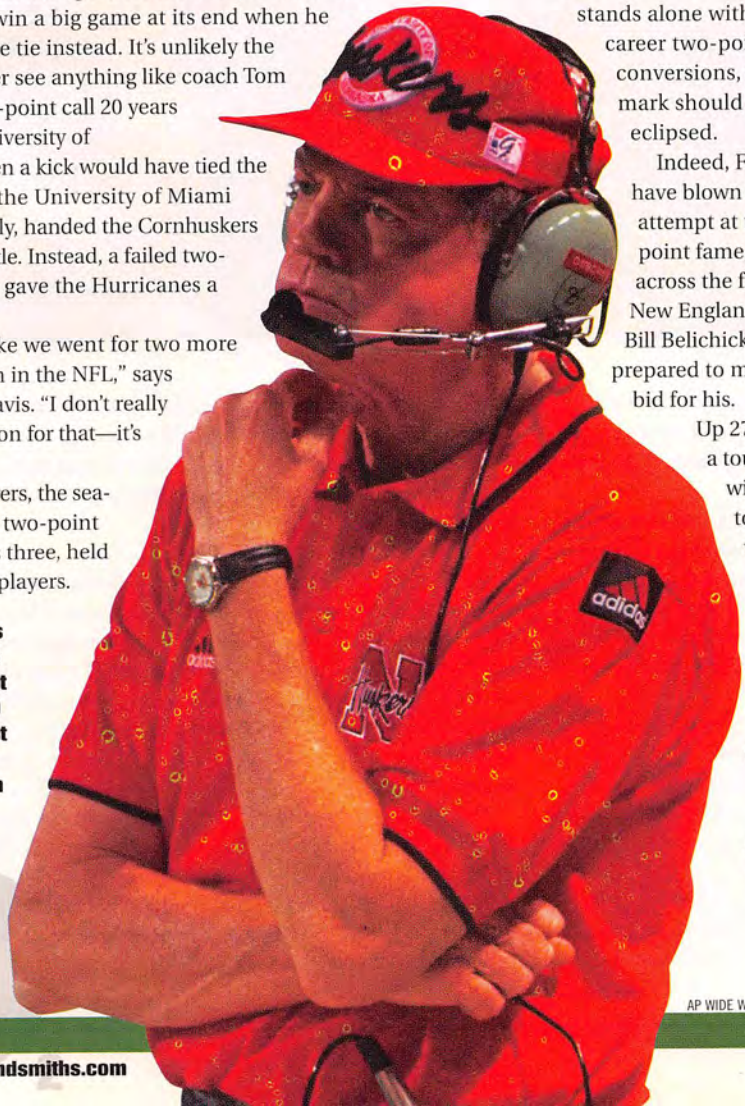
Former Atlanta WR Terance Mathis holds the NFL record with six career two-point conversions.

Revisiting Osborne's folly

No NFL coach has opted for the two-point conversion to try to win a big game at its end when he can kick for the tie instead. It's unlikely the league will ever see anything like coach Tom Osborne's two-point call 20 years ago for the University of Nebraska, when a kick would have tied the game against the University of Miami and, most likely, handed the Cornhuskers the national title. Instead, a failed two-point attempt gave the Hurricanes a 31-30 win.

"It seems like we went for two more in college than in the NFL," says Cleveland's Davis. "I don't really know the reason for that—it's just reality."

Among players, the season record for two-point conversions is three, held by numerous players.



Tom Osborne's decision to go for a two-point conversion 20 years ago cost his Nebraska Cornhuskers a national title against the Miami Hurricanes.

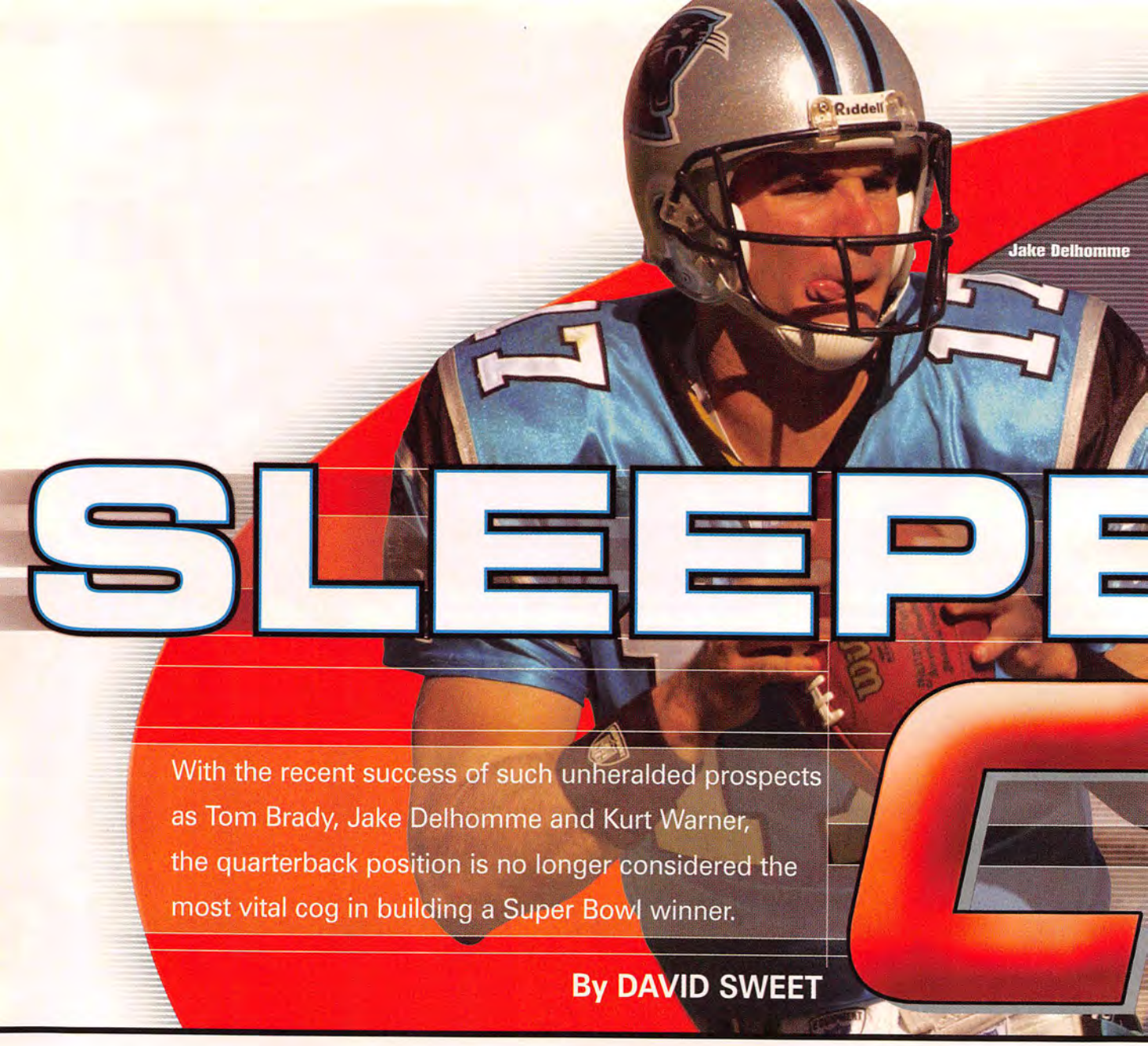
AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Though former Atlanta receiver Terance Mathis stands alone with six career two-point conversions, that mark should be eclipsed.

Indeed, Fox may have blown his attempt at two-point fame, but across the field, New England coach Bill Belichick was prepared to make a bid for his.

Up 27-22 after a touchdown with 2:51 to play, Belichick called his first two-point conversion attempt of the season. The timing was right, the score was right, the call—a Kevin Faulk running play— followed the percentages. And after five straight two-point failures covering two Super Bowls (the Oakland Raiders contributed three in their loss to Tampa Bay in 2003) the Patriots made the two and, of course, emerged a champion.

David Sweet is a freelance writer and frequent contributor to Street & Smith's *based in Lake Forest, Ill.*



SLEEPE C

With the recent success of such unheralded prospects as Tom Brady, Jake Delhomme and Kurt Warner, the quarterback position is no longer considered the most vital cog in building a Super Bowl winner.

By DAVID SWEET

As the AFC and NFC championship games beckoned last season, it looked as if Peyton Manning and Donovan McNabb would finally achieve what appeared to be their destiny: the Super Bowl.

After all, Manning, selected by Indianapolis as the first overall pick in the 1998 NFL Draft, had been heralded as a can't-miss champion since his days at the University of Tennessee. Aside from breaking Colts records long held by the legendary Johnny Unitas, the 6-foot-5 quarterback had blown through playoff opponents as the AFC Championship Game against New England and sixth-round draft choice Tom Brady approached.

Over in Philadelphia, McNabb, a No. 1 pick in 1999, was preparing for his third straight NFC title game. And when he looked across the field, he would see an opposing quarterback, Carolina's Jake Delhomme, whose pedigree—an undrafted NFL Europe castoff who started the season as a backup—was laughable by comparison.

The final laughs, though, were on Indianapolis and Philadelphia. Despite Manning's No. 2 quarterback rating during the regular season (Brady's was 10th), he was stifled by the tough Patriot defense. Before he was injured in the second quarter, McNabb had stumbled badly as the Panthers sacked him and his team.

Instead of a Madison Avenue dream matchup featuring Manning and McNabb, lesser constellations Brady and Delhomme flashed across America.

No one should have been surprised.

Even though 16 of the first 33 Super Bowls were won by quarterbacks drafted in the first round, only one of the last five has been captured by a signal-caller picked higher than the sixth round.

Will a big-name quarterback—a guy in the mold of John Elway or Troy Aikman—win a Super Bowl anytime soon? Or have we entered a new era in which quarterbacks drafted late—or unearthed in secondary leagues—are all teams require, as long as the defense is swift and powerful?

"You don't need a guy who has a rocket arm like (Green Bay's) Brett Favre or has John Elway-type mobility," says Reggie McKenzie, director of pro personnel for the Green Bay Packers since the mid-1990s. "I think the importance now is to build the team and not just focus on the quarterback and think he is going to lead and do everything—you can't do that."

(L TO R): DALE BARBEE; ROB BROWN/SPORTPICS; LIVIO SUAREZ/A.I.M.

On many great teams of yore, the linchpin was offense, topped by a star quarterback. To generations of fans, the names of past Super Bowl-winning QBs defined the NFL. Joe Namath. Terry Bradshaw. Joe Montana. Elway and Aikman. All are or will be Hall-of-Famers. Three of them—Bradshaw in 1970, Elway in 1983 and Aikman in 1989—were top overall draft picks, while Namath was the New York Jets' first choice 39 years ago in the old American Football League.

And Montana? While his sterling performance with San Francisco—four Super Bowl wins—was once looked upon as an aberration for a third-round draft choice, today it would be far from earth shattering.

The Super Bowl's trend away from big-name quarterbacks and toward ferocious defenses started during the 2001 game. Sparked by middle linebacker Ray Lewis, the Baltimore defense allowed no points to the offense of the New York Giants, who mustered only seven thanks to special teams. Though the Ravens' quarterback was journeyman Trent Dilfer, he threw a touchdown pass and guided them to an easy title.

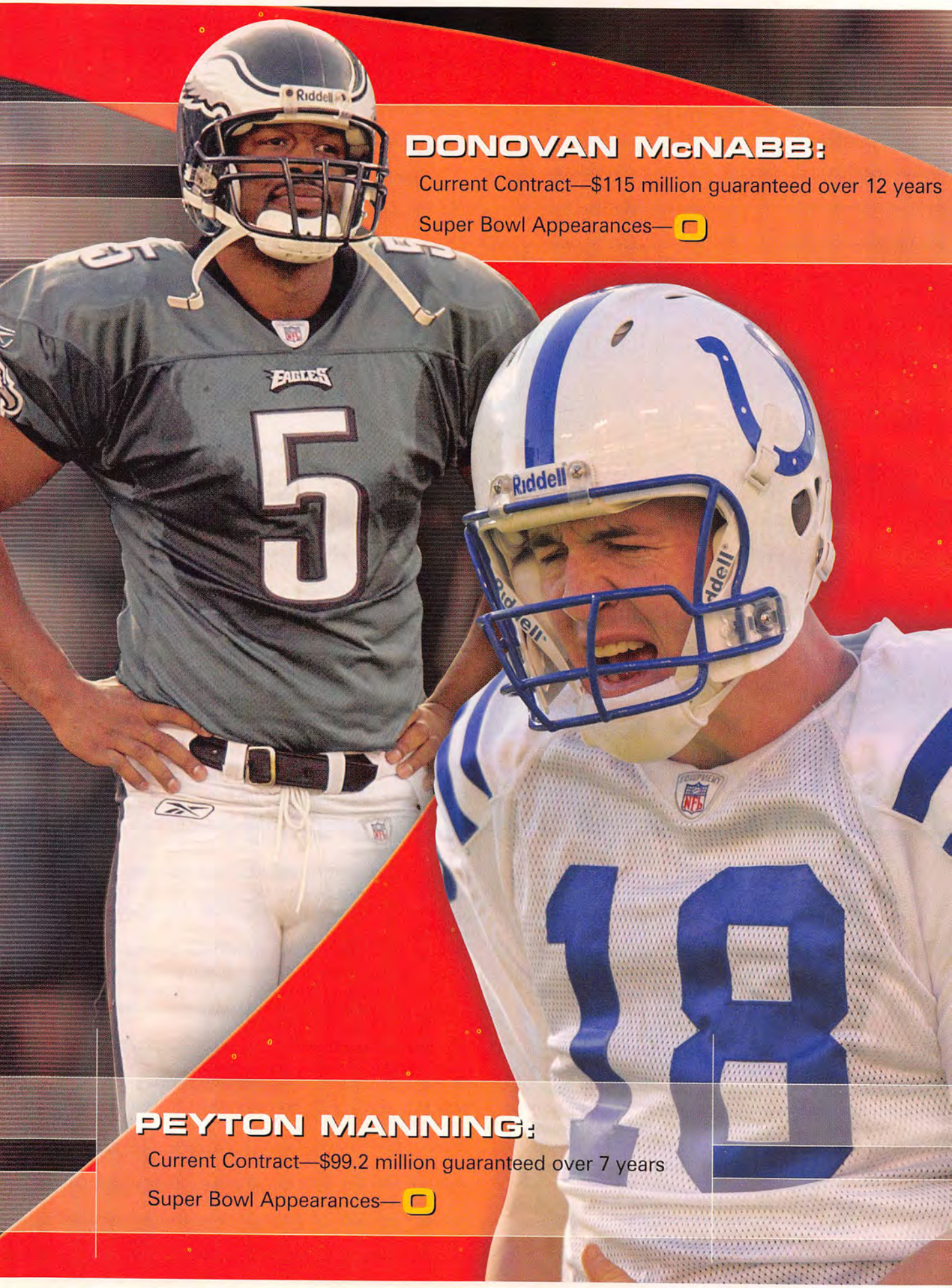
The next year, Brady—who entered the season almost a complete unknown—captured the Super Bowl MVP award during an upset win over St. Louis, as the Rams' high-powered offense scored only 17 points. In 2003, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and ninth-round pick Brad Johnson (a career backup at Florida State) put up 48 points against the Oakland Raiders in a cakewalk win that was spurred by a dominating defense.

This past season Brady won his second Super Bowl title. Not bad for a guy who in 2001 was an unheralded backup in New England to Drew Bledsoe—himself a former No. 1 draft choice about to cash in on a potential $100 million contract. Bledsoe, of course, led the Buffalo Bills to a 6-10 record last season.

Why have defenses supplanted the great quarterbacks? The top reason consists of two words: salary cap.

Implemented in 1994 with a spending ceiling of $34.6 million per team, the salary cap has helped spread the wealth—at the expense of the big-money signal-caller.

"People are realizing that it is not the quarterback alone," McKenzie says. "They are trying to figure out how to protect the quarterback and how to stop the quarterback. That means finding pass rushers, shutdown corners, getting a defense and building an offensive line, and trying to help the quarterback with a running back and a couple of weapons."



DONOVAN McNABB:

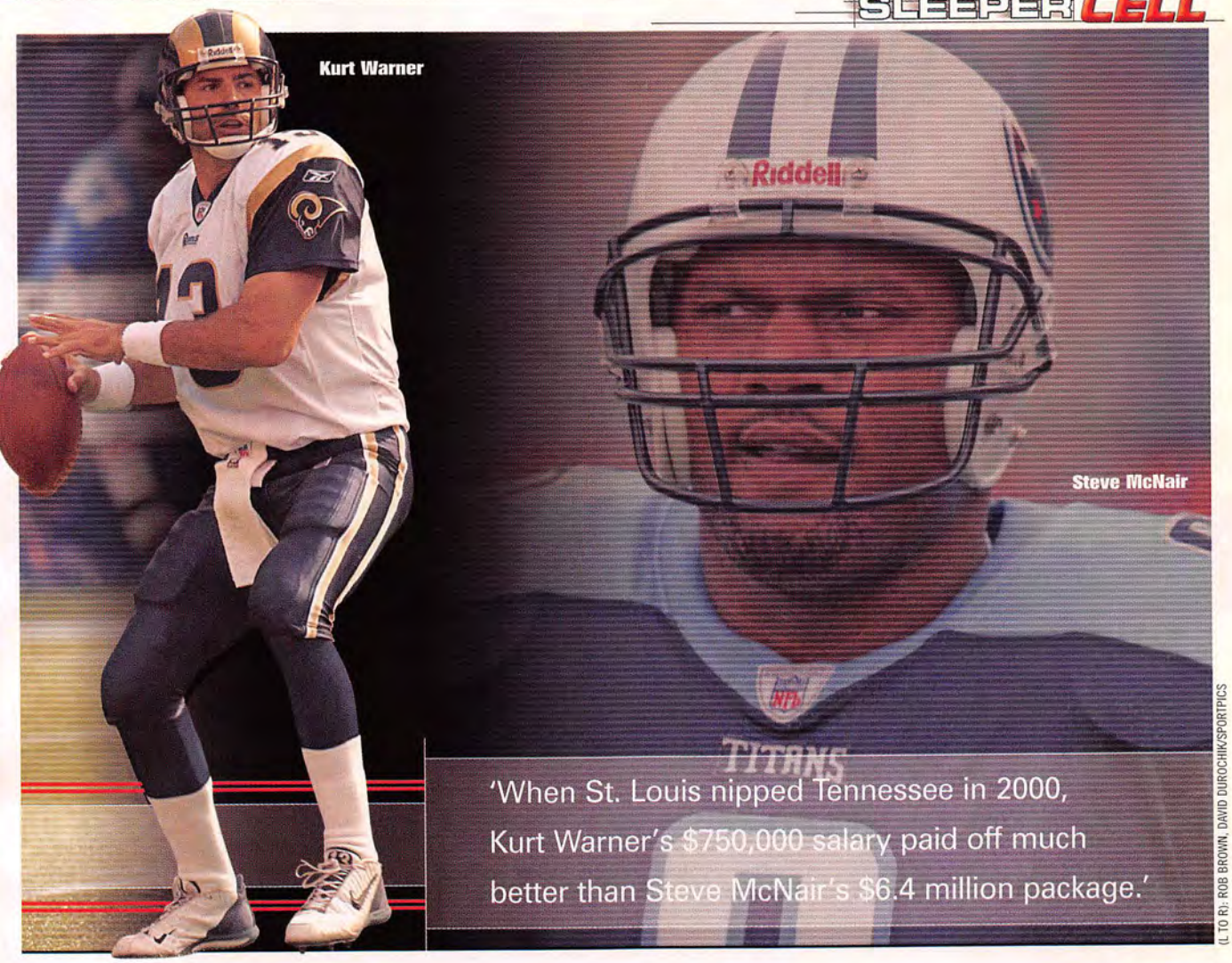
Current Contract—$115 million guaranteed over 12 years

Super Bowl Appearances—0

PEYTON MANNING:

Current Contract—$99.2 million guaranteed over 7 years

Super Bowl Appearances—0


Kurt Warner
Steve McNair
'When St. Louis nipped Tennessee in 2000, Kurt Warner's $750,000 salary paid off much better than Steve McNair's $6.4 million package.'

(L TO R): ROB BROWN, DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

A premium quarterback is always going to cost more than, say, a premium linebacker. Think also of the star power—and drawing power—of a top-notch running back or receiver. When was the last time someone came to the stadium to watch a great safety play? In the salary-cap era, it's cheaper to construct tough defenses than overpowering offenses.

In the past decade, nearly all Super Bowl winners posted a regular-season defensive ranking among the top 12 teams in the NFL. Offense? The Patriots themselves ranked only 17th in total yards per game last season.

The salary cap's impact is seen in the draft. In 1983, six quarterbacks—including Elway and Dan Marino—were picked in the first round. By 2002, only three were chosen. One, Washington's Patrick Ramsey, is already likely bound for the bench this year, holding the clipboard for high-profile free agent Mark Brunell.

Still, some teams buck the trend. The Colts rewarded Manning with a mammoth contract in the offseason worth almost $100 million. That's money that could have been earmarked to shore up an average defense.

The Manning payout probably won't help them win the big game. According to the *The Wall Street Journal*, from 2000 to 2003 the less-expensive quarterback won the Super Bowl each time. The differences in salary were often startling: When St. Louis nipped Tennessee in 2000, Kurt Warner's $750,000 salary paid off much better than Steve McNair's $6.4 million package.

Aside from the changes wrought by the salary cap, Gil Brandt, former director of player personnel for the Dallas Cowboys and now an analyst and columnist for *NFL.com*, says a team's system is more important today than it was in the era of Roger Staubach and Ken Stabler in the 1970s.

"How does a Kurt Warner become a Super Bowl quarterback when he couldn't even start at Northern Iowa? Ninety percent of it is the system he plays in," Brandt says. "At the University of Southern California, that offensive system is so good, it'll be interesting how [2003 No. 1 overall pick] Carson Palmer does for Cincinnati."

It's also likely that the difference between a first-round draft choice and a fourth-round pick at quarterback is smaller than in years past.

"We are seeing a lot better quarterbacks coming out of college," Brandt says. "Guys are throwing the ball all year-round. Quarterbacks develop their passing in high school with seven-on-seven (practice) games."

During the free-agency period this past offseason, "defense" was the key word for top teams. Looking to get out of the first round of the playoffs, Seattle signed defensive lineman Grant Wistrom to a six-year deal. Oakland, yearning to recapture its Super Bowl swagger, plucked massive nose tackle Ted Washington from New England. And the Eagles, tired of depending on McNabb to carry the team, inked defensive lineman Jevon Kearse to a record eight-year, $66 million contract.

"A great quarterback," says Green Bay's McKenzie, "is not automatically going to get you in the Super Bowl."

David Sweet writes a column for NBCSports.com *and lives in Lake Forest, Ill.*

OPPOSITE (L TO R): ROB BROWN, DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

THE ABSOLUTE PITS

Street & Smith's threw **1,310 NFL TEAMS** into our all-knowing computer and, after much analysis, it spit out the **20 WORST TEAMS** in pro football history, led by the 1981 Baltimore Dolts (uh, Colts).

T.J. Houshmanzadeh

By G. Scott Thomas

The 1985 Chicago Bears were the greatest team the NFL has ever produced.

Those Bears had it all: Mike Ditka's fiery leadership, Buddy Ryan's defensive genius, Walter Payton's flashy footwork, Jim McMahon's mischievous swagger, Mike Singletary's inimitable intensity. They capped a 15-1 season by pounding New England in the Super Bowl, 46-10, a lasting exclamation of their brilliance.

But that's another story.

This story is about the worst teams in NFL history, led by the most terrible of them all, the 1981 Baltimore Colts, who somehow won two games by a total of three points, but otherwise were stunningly incompetent.

The '81 Colts featured an offense that depended on Bert Jones' desperation passes and little else, a no-name defense (remember Mike Ozdowski, Joe Federspiel and Derrick Hatchett?) that functioned as a sieve, and fans who first renamed the team the Dolts and then gave up on it entirely. The final home game—a victory, by the way—drew just 17,000 to Memorial Stadium.

Street & Smith's analyzed 1,310 teams from the NFL's modern era and determined that the 1981 Colts/Dolts were the worst ever. (The study covered every franchise eligible for the NFL championship from 1946 to 2003, including AFL teams from 1966-69.) Each team's win-loss record, offensive and defensive performances, and average margin of victory (or defeat) were compared to the league averages for the same year, yielding a score on a 100-point scale.

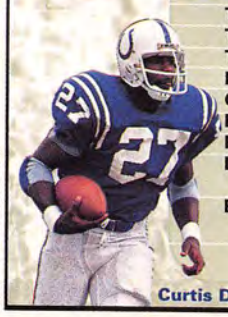
The 1981 Colts ranked dead last with an index of 2.16, thanks in large part to their defense, which our computer found to be the worst in modern times. They edged out the second-worst team, the 1990 New England Patriots (4.45 points), whose offense was the most pitiful ever. (The 1985 Bears, by the way, boasted the top index in our study, 93.89 points.)

Below are capsule reports on the NFL's 20 worst teams, including their top passers, rushers and receivers, as well as any Pro Bowlers they had. You might be amazed at all of the stars who were dragged into these season-long nightmares, including Hall-of-Famers Earl Campbell, Eric Dickerson, Tommy McDonald and O.J. Simpson, and likely future honorees such as Troy Aikman and Steve Young.

You might also be surprised that 13 teams were worse than the 1976 Tampa Bay Buccaneers, long considered the yardstick for futility, but that's what our formula determined. Suffice it to say that every team below, regardless of individual rankings, was terrible in its own right—lousy on offense, miserable on defense.

Each one truly was a loser.

#1 BALTIMORE COLTS (1981)



Curtis Dickey

MITCHELL B. REIBEL/AI WIRE

Bert Jones

PM/SPORTSCHROME

Index	2.16 points
Record	2-14-0
Coach	Mike McCormack
Top Passer	Bert Jones (244 of 426 passes, 21 TDs, 20 interceptions)
Top Rusher	Curtis Dickey (164 carries, 779 yards, 7 TDs)
Top Receiver	Randy McMillan (50 catches, 466 yards, 1 TD)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	16.19 points per game (26th of 28 teams)
Defense	33.31 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
High Points	Opened the season with a win over New England (29-28) and closed it the same way over the same team (23-21).
Low Points	Lost 14 straight to everyone else, with the worst whippings coming from Buffalo (35-3), San Diego (43-14) and the New York Jets (41-14).
Bottom Line	Colts, a/k/a Dolts, had the worst defense in NFL history, allowing 4.25 touchdowns and 425 yards per game. Eight losses came by more than 21 points.

John Stephens

Irving Fryar

(L TO R): FINAL SHOT/JRP; TOM DIPACE

#2 NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS (1990)

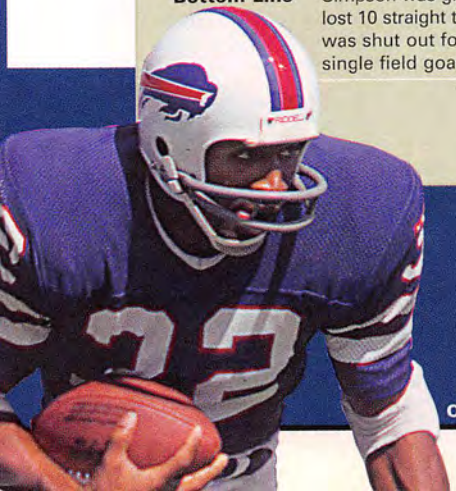
Index	4.45 points
Record	1-15-0
Coach	Rod Rust
Top Passer	Marc Wilson (139 of 265 passes, 6 TDs, 11 interceptions)
Top Rusher	John Stephens (212 carries, 808 yards, 2 TDs)
Top Receiver	Irving Fryar (54 catches, 856 yards, 4 TDs)
Pro Bowl	OT Bruce Armstrong
Offense	11.31 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
Defense	27.88 points per game (27th of 28 teams)
High Points	Inched past Indianapolis, 16-14, in the second week of the season.
Low Points	Capped the year with 14 straight losses, including blowouts at the hands of the New York Jets (42-7) and Cincinnati (41-7).
Bottom Line	Had the worst offense in NFL history. Scored more than 20 points in a game just once all season; didn't top 14 points in the final eight games.

#3 DALLAS TEXANS (1952)

Index	5.21 points
Record	1-11-0
Coach	Jim Phelan
Top Passer	Frank Tripucka (86 of 174 passes, 3 TDs, 17 interceptions)
Top Rusher	George Taliaferro (100 carries, 419 yards, 1 TD)
Top Receiver	Dick Wilkins (32 catches, 416 yards, 1 TD)
Pro Bowl	HB George Taliaferro, G John Wozniak
Offense	15.17 points per game (11th of 12 teams)
Defense	35.58 points per game (12th of 12 teams)
High Points	Surprised Chicago, 27-23, on Thanksgiving Day at a neutral site (Akron, Ohio) before 3,000 fans.
Low Points	NFL champion Detroit administered Dallas' two worst losses, 43-13 and 41-6.
Bottom Line	Lost the first nine games of the year. Gave up more than 35 points eight times. Franchise folded and became the core of the new Baltimore Colts in 1953.

#4 BUFFALO BILLS (1971)

Index	6.21 points
Record	1-13-0
Coach	Harvey Johnson
Top Passer	Dennis Shaw (149 of 291 passes, 11 TDs, 26 interceptions)
Top Rusher	O.J. Simpson (183 carries, 742 yards, 5 TDs)
Top Receiver	Marlin Briscoe (44 catches, 603 yards, 5 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	13.14 points per game (26th of 26 teams)
Defense	28.14 points per game (26th of 26 teams)
High Points	Waited until three weeks before the end of the season to beat New England, 27-20.
Low Points	Suffered back-to-back shutouts early in the year at the hands of Minnesota (19-0) and Baltimore (43-0).
Bottom Line	Simpson was given little to do as the Bills lost 10 straight to open the season. Buffalo was shut out four times and held to a single field goal in a fifth game.



O.J. Simpson

#5 DALLAS COWBOYS (1989)

Index	6.49 points
Record	1-15-0
Coach	Jimmy Johnson
Top Passer	Troy Aikman (155 of 293 passes, 9 TDs, 18 interceptions)
Top Rusher	Paul Palmer (112 carries, 446 yards, 2 TDs)
Top Receiver	Kelvin Martin (46 catches, 644 yards, 2 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	12.75 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
Defense	24.56 points per game (24th of 28 teams)
High Points	Scored a 13-3 win over Washington, which earlier had beaten the Cowboys by 23 points.
Low Points	Suffered consecutive lopsided losses to Washington, the New York Giants, Green Bay, San Francisco and Kansas City by a combined score of 158-75.
Bottom Line	Aikman was thrown to the wolves in his rookie season. The Cowboys lost their first eight games, as well as the final seven.

Kelvin Martin

(L TO R): FINAL SHOT/JRP; MICHAEL YELMAN/AI WIRE

MITCHELL B. REIBEL/AP WIRE

Archie Manning

#6 NEW ORLEANS SAINTS (1980)

Index	6.63 points
Record	1-15-0
Coaches	Dick Nolan, Dick Stanfel
Top Passer	Archie Manning (309 of 509 passes, 23 TDs, 20 interceptions)
Top Rusher	Jimmy Rogers (80 carries, 366 yards, 1 TD)
Top Receiver	Wes Chandler (65 catches, 975 yards, 6 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	18.19 points per game (21st of 28 teams)
Defense	30.44 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
High Points	Beat the Jets by the skin of their teeth (21-20) in the next-to-last week of the season.
Low Points	Battered by St. Louis (40-7) and then two weeks later by Atlanta (41-14), both at home.
Bottom Line	Manning threw for more TDs than in any other season in his career, yet the Saints started 0-12, costing Nolan his job.

#7 DETROIT LIONS (1946)

Index	7.02 points
Record	1-10-0
Coach	Gus Dorais
Top Passer	Dave Ryan (73 of 154 passes, 6 TDs, 17 interceptions)
Top Rusher	Camp Wilson (64 carries, 207 yards, 3 TDs)
Top Receiver	John Greene (20 catches, 289 yards, 2 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	12.91 points per game (9th of 10 teams)
Defense	28.18 points per game (10th of 10 teams)
High Points	Pulled off a 17-7 nailbiter over Pittsburgh before a home crowd of just 13,600.
Low Points	Deteriorated quickly after the Pittsburgh win, losing to the Bears, 42-6, just two weeks later.
Bottom Line	Gave up at least 34 points in three of their first four losses, setting the tone for a miserable season.

#8 BALTIMORE COLTS (1982)

Index	7.04 points
Record	0-8-1
Coach	Frank Kush
Top Passer	Mike Pagel (111 of 221 passes, 5 TDs, 7 interceptions)
Top Rusher	Randy McMillan (101 carries, 305 yards, 1 TD)
Top Receiver	Matt Bouza (22 catches, 287 yards, 2 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	12.56 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
Defense	26.22 points per game (26th of 28 teams)
High Points	Didn't have any wins to boast about. The only bright spot was a 20-20 tie with Green Bay.
Low Points	Offense completely dissapeared in consecutive shutout defeats by the New York Jets (37-0) and Buffalo (20-0).
Bottom Line	A player's strike mercifully curtailed Baltimore's season. The 1982 Colts were marginally better than the 1981 version, the worst team of the modern era.

Matt Bouza

#9 PITTSBURGH STEELERS (1965)

Index	7.2 points
Record	2-12-0
Coach	Mike Nixon
Top Passer	Bill Nelson (121 of 270 passes, 8 TDs, 17 interceptions)
Top Rusher	Dick Hoak (131 carries, 426 yards, 5 TDs)
Top Receiver	Gary Ballman (40 catches, 859 yards, 5 TDs)
Pro Bowl	WR Gary Ballman
Offense	14.43 points per game (14th of 14 teams)
Defense	28.36 points per game (12th of 14 teams)
High Points	Fortune smiled on the Steelers at midseason, with back-to-back wins over Philadelphia (20-14) and Dallas (22-13).
Low Points	Philadelphia avenged its loss with a 47-13 pasting of Pittsburgh near the end of the year.
Bottom Line	The season spiraled out of control as the Steelers lost their final five games by margins of 21 to 34 points.

Dick Hoak

(L TO R): PAUL JASIENSKI; AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Wayne Chrebet

Adrian Murrell

(L TO R): FINAL SHOT/IRP; ALBERT DICKSON/TSN/ICON SMI

#10 CINCINNATI BENGALS (2002)

Index	7.31 points
Record	2-14-0
Coach	Dick LeBeau
Top Passer	Jon Kitna (294 of 473 passes, 16 TDs, 16 interceptions)
Top Rusher	Corey Dillon (314 carries, 1,311 yards, 7 TDs)
Top Receiver	Chad Johnson (69 catches, 1,166 yards, 5 TDs)
Pro Bowl	FB Lorenzo Neal
Offense	17.44 points per game (28th of 32 teams)
Defense	28.50 points per game (32nd of 32 teams)
High Points	Slotted two games in the win column: 38-3 over the expansion Houston Texans and 20-13 over New Orleans.
Low Points	Failed to score more than seven points in any of their first four games, losing by a combined margin of 119-23.
Bottom Line	Worst season in a string of terrible seasons for the Bengals, leading to the hiring of Marvin Lewis and a turnaround in 2003.

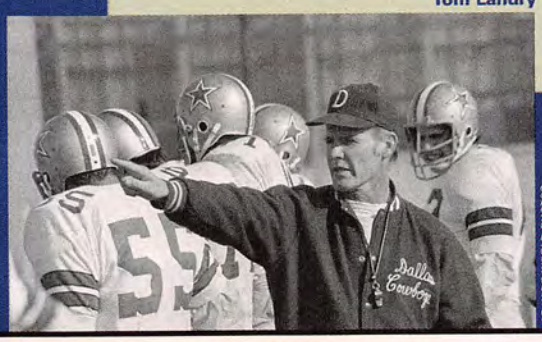
#11 NEW YORK JETS (1996)

Index	7.38 points
Record	1-15-0
Coach	Rich Kotite
Top Passer	Frank Reich (175 of 331 passes, 15 TDs, 16 interceptions)
Top Rusher	Adrian Murrell (301 carries, 1,249 yards, 6 TDs)
Top Receiver	Wayne Chrebet (84 catches, 909 yards, 3 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	17.44 points per game (27th of 30 teams)
Defense	28.38 points per game (29th of 30 teams)
High Points	Jets' lone victory came in late October over the Arizona Cardinals (30-21).
Low Points	Scored 10 points or fewer in six losses, three of which came in a row toward the end of the year: Buffalo and Houston (both 35-10) and New England (34-10).
Bottom Line	Season began with eight straight defeats and ended with another losing streak of seven.

#12 DALLAS COWBOYS (1960)

Index	7.82 points
Record	0-11-1
Coach	Tom Landry
Top Passer	Eddie LeBaron (111 of 225 passes, 12 TDs, 25 interceptions)
Top Rusher	L.G. Dupre (104 carries, 362 yards, 3 TDs)
Top Receiver	Jim Doran (31 catches, 554 yards, 3 TDs)
Pro Bowl	OE Jim Doran
Offense	14.75 points per game (13th of 13 teams)
Defense	30.75 points per game (13nd of 13 teams)
High Points	Only saving grace was a 31-31 tie with the New York Giants a week before the season's end.
Low Points	Held to a single touchdown in poundings by Cleveland (48-7), Baltimore (45-7) and Green Bay (41-7).
Bottom Line	Dallas went winless in its expansion season, but came close three different times, with a tie and a pair of two-point losses.

Tom Landry



AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

#13 ATLANTA FALCONS (1987)

Index	7.92 points
Record	3-12-0
Coach	Marion Campbell
Top Passer	Scott Campbell (136 of 260 passes, 11 TDs, 14 interceptions)
Top Rusher	Gerald Riggs (203 carries, 875 yards, 2 TDs)
Top Receiver	Floyd Dixon (36 catches, 600 yards, 5 TDs)
Pro Bowl	G Bill Fralic, RB Gerald Riggs
Offense	13.67 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
Defense	29.07 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
High Points	Won three games by a total of 16 points, over Washington (21-20), the Los Angeles Rams (24-20) and Dallas (21-10).
Low Points	Suffered consecutive midseason losses to New Orleans and Cleveland by a total score of 76-3.
Bottom Line	Regular team gave up 30 or more points eight times in 12 games. Strike-replacement squad was more competitive, yielding only 24 points per game in three contests.

Bill Fralic

MICHAEL YELMAN/AI WIRE

AL MESSERSCHMIDT/WIRE IMAGE

John McKay

RICK STEWART/GETTY IMAGES

Steve Young

#14 TAMPA BAY (1976) BUCCANEERS

Index	7.96 points
Record	0-14-0
Coach	John McKay
Top passer	Steve Spurrier (156 of 311 passes, 7 TDs, 12 interceptions)
Top rusher	Louis Carter (171 carries, 521 yards, 1 TD)
Top receiver	Morris Owens (30 catches, 390 yards, 6 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	8.93 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
Defense	29.43 points per game (27th of 28 teams)
High points	Came close a few times, losing games by five points or less to Buffalo (14-9), Seattle (13-10) and Miami (23-20).
Low points	Bucs were shut out five times, including their first two games of the year against Houston (20-0) and San Diego (23-0).
Bottom line	Spurrier returned to Florida after nine years with the 49ers, yet couldn't stir up any offense. Bucs scored more than 10 points just once in their first six games.

#15 TAMPA BAY (1986) BUCCANEERS

Index	8.34 points
Record	2-14-0
Coach	Leeman Bennett
Top passer	Steve Young (195 of 363 passes, 8 TDs, 13 interceptions)
Top rusher	James Wilder (190 carries, 704 yards, 2 TDs)
Top receiver	Calvin Magee (45 catches, 564 yards, 5 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	14.94 points per game (26th of 28 teams)
Defense	29.56 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
High points	Rare offensive outbursts sparked wins over Detroit (24-20) and Buffalo (34-28).
Low points	Defense fell apart in consecutive late-season losses to Minnesota (45-13) and Chicago (48-14).
Bottom line	Bucs were 10 years older, but still seemed like an expansion team, ending the season with a seven-game losing streak. Better things awaited Young in San Francisco.

#16 HOUSTON OILERS (1983)

Index	8.49 points
Record	2-14-0
Coaches	Ed Biles, Chuck Studley
Top passer	Oliver Luck (124 of 217 passes, 8 TDs, 13 interceptions)
Top rusher	Earl Campbell (322 carries, 1,301 yards, 12 TDs)
Top receiver	Tim Smith (83 catches, 1,176 yards, 6 TDs)
Pro Bowl	RB Earl Campbell
Offense	18.00 points per game (22nd of 28 teams)
Defense	28.75 points per game (27th of 28 teams)
High points	Lost their first 10 games, then rebounded to beat Detroit (27-17) and Cleveland (34-27) in a five-week period.
Low points	Bengals lashed the Oilers twice in three weeks by a combined score of 93-24.
Bottom line	Campbell's final 1,000-yard season was wasted, as a six-game losing streak cost Biles his job. Studley lost his first four before picking up two late wins.

FINAL SHOT/JRP

Earl Campbell

#17 INDIANAPOLIS (1991) COLTS

Index	8.51 points
Record	1-15-0
Coaches	Ron Meyer, Rick Venturi
Top passer	Jeff George (292 of 485 passes, 10 TDs, 12 interceptions)
Top rusher	Eric Dickerson (167 carries, 536 yards, 2 TDs)
Top receiver	Bill Brooks (72 catches, 888 yards, 4 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	8.94 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
Defense	23.81 points per game (26th of 28 teams)
High points	Saved themselves from a winless season by the barest of margins, beating the Jets by one point (28-27).
Low points	Scored less than eight points in eight of their first nine games, with Buffalo administering the worst beating (42-6).
Bottom line	Meyer was gone after five season-opening defeats; Venturi went 1-10 the rest of the way.

STEVE JACOBSON

Eric Dickerson

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BARRY SANDERS

Street & Smith's SPORTS ANNUALS

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1988 Heisman Trophy winner
- Five-time NFC rushing leader
- 10-time Pro Bowl selection (1989-1998 seasons)
- Holds all-time NFL record for consecutive 1,000-yard seasons (10, 1989-1998)
- Second-leading rusher of all time (15,269 yards)
- 109 career touchdowns (99 rushing, 10 receiving)
- 76 total 100-yard rushing games
- Inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame in 2004

DID YOU KNOW ... Sanders was the first NFL back to run for 1,000 yards nine years in a row and the first to run for 1,500-plus yards four years in a row.

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TONY TOMSIC/SPORTSCHROME

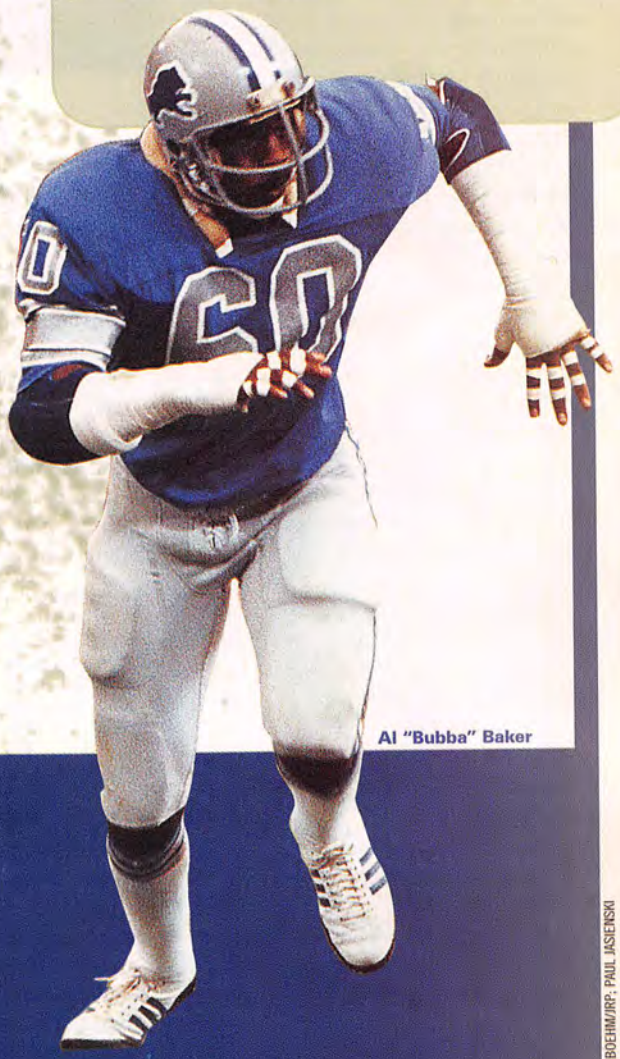
Tommy Nobis

#18 ATLANTA FALCONS (1967)

Index	8.67 points
Record	1-12-1
Coach	Norb Hecker
Top passer	Randy Johnson (142 of 288 passes, 10 TDs, 21 interceptions)
Top rusher	Junior Coffey (180 carries, 722 yards, 4 TDs)
Top receiver	Tommy McDonald (33 catches, 436 yards, 4 TDs)
Pro Bowl	LB Tommy Nobis
Offense	12.50 points per game (25th of 25 teams)
Defense	30.14 points per game (25th of 25 teams)
High points	Tied Washington (20-20) and edged past Minnesota (21-20) in a three-week span.
Low points	Closed the season with seven straight defeats. The ugliest were at the hands of Baltimore (49-7) and Dallas (37-7).
Bottom line	Falcons were held to seven points or less in eight games, with a combined score of 260-37.

#19 DETROIT LIONS (1979)

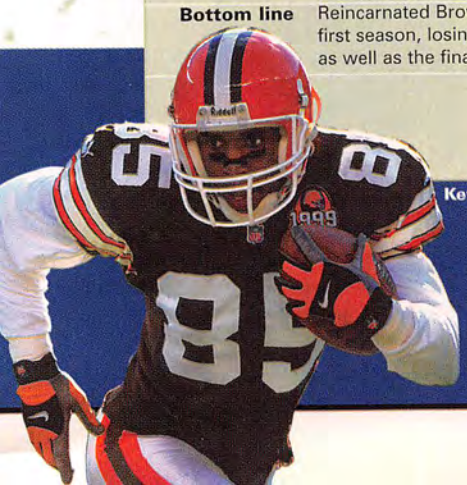
Index	8.86 points
Record	2-14-0
Coach	Monte Clark
Top passer	Jeff Komlo (183 of 368 passes, 11 TDs, 23 interceptions)
Top rusher	Dexter Bussey (144 carries, 625 yards, 1 TD)
Top receiver	Freddie Scott (62 catches, 929 yards, 5 TDs)
Pro Bowl	DE Al "Bubba" Baker, TE David Hill
Offense	13.69 points per game (28th of 28 teams)
Defense	22.81 points per game (23rd of 28 teams)
High points	Squeaked past Atlanta early in the season (24-23) and shut out Chicago near the end (20-0).
Low points	Lions' worst losses were to Philadelphia (44-7), Chicago (35-7) and the New York Jets (31-10).
Bottom line	Preseason injury to QB Gary Danielson destroyed the team. The Lions couldn't catch a break; eight of their losses were by eight points or less.



Al "Bubba" Baker

#20 CLEVELAND BROWNS (1999)

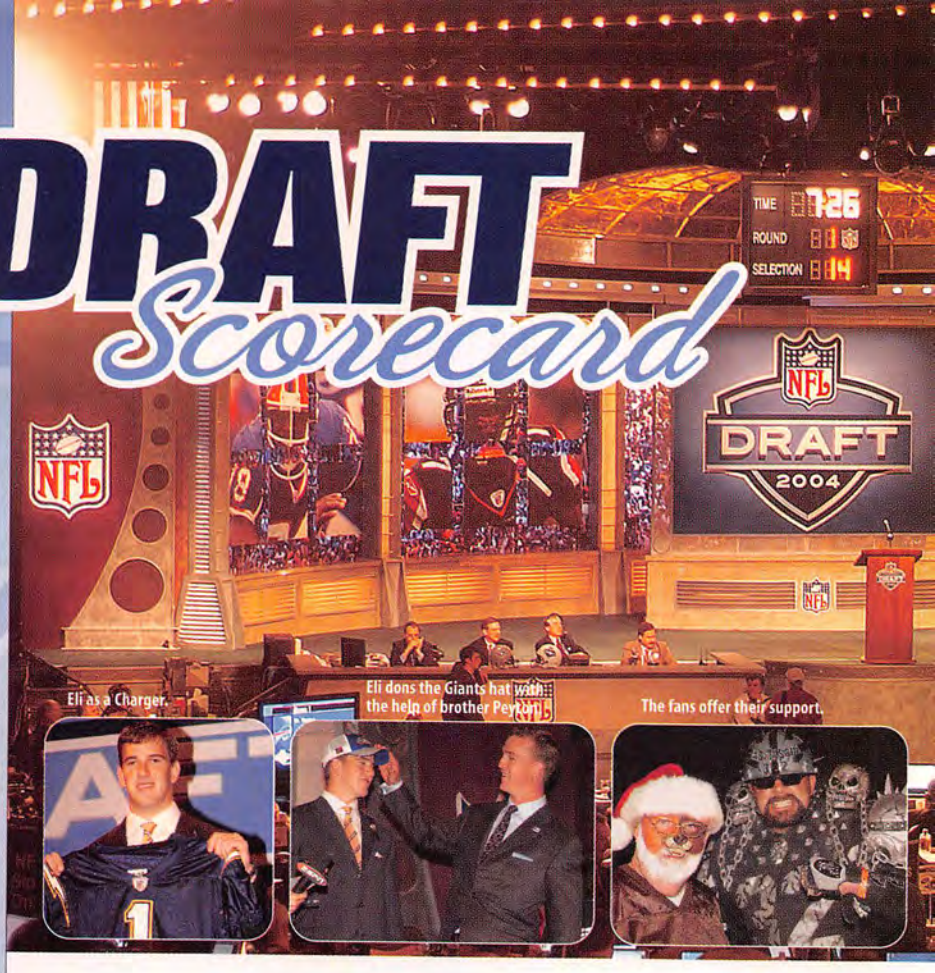
Index	9.00 points
Record	2-14-0
Coach	Chris Palmer
Top passer	Tim Couch (223 of 399 passes, 15 TDs, 13 interceptions)
Top rusher	Terry Kirby (130 carries, 452 yards, 6 TDs)
Top receiver	Kevin Johnson (66 catches, 986 yards, 8 TDs)
Pro Bowl	None
Offense	13.56 points per game (31st of 31 teams)
Defense	27.31 points per game (29th of 31 teams)
High points	Prosperity came in a three-week midseason span, with wins over New Orleans (21-16) and Pittsburgh (16-15).
Low points	Nothing was worse than the opening-day loss to Pittsburgh (43-0), though defeats by Baltimore (41-9) and St. Louis (34-3) came close.
Bottom line	Reincarnated Browns suffered through their first season, losing their first seven games, as well as the final six.



Kevin Johnson

(L TO R): BOEHM/JRP; PAUL JASIENSKI

2004 NFL DRAFT Scorecard



Eli as a Charger.

Eli dons the Giants hat with the help of brother Peyton.

The fans offer their support.

BY BRIAN STEVENSON
Stevenson's Draft Notebook

Diamond mining

The chance of finding the next Tom Brady is a never-ending dream that keeps NFL scouts up nights

Kurt Warner, Priest Holmes, Rod Smith, Wayne Chrebet, John Randle, Adewale Ogunleye, London Fletcher and Mike Vanderjagt are just a few of the names of undrafted players who went on to be Pro Bowlers.

Every year, NFL scouts scour the country in search of diamonds in the rough. Often times, teams select these sleepers late in the draft to be sure they have an opportunity to work with them during the camps leading up to the season. In other cases, players go completely undrafted and end up exceeding all expectations.

By now, no NFL fan on the planet doesn't know that the winning quarterback in last year's Super Bowl, Tom Brady, was a sixth-round pick and the losing one, Jake Delhomme, wasn't even drafted.

If you're looking for players taken on the second day of the draft who we think will surprise, look no further than these guys:

• Mewelde Moore, RB, Minnesota, fourth round: Forty-one-game starter at Tulane with deceptive speed who's an instinctive cutback runner. Could be even more advanced at this stage if he hadn't played baseball for the Green Wave each offseason.

• Isaac Sopoaga, DT, San Francisco, fourth round: Tremendously strong 6-2, 320-pound Samoan who started 23 games at Hawaii and had an amazing 31 sacks one season in junior college.

While 255 players were drafted this year, at least that many were signed following the draft with the opportunity to catch the eye of NFL teams.

A few undrafted players to keep an eye on this summer are Jackson State quarterback Robert Kent (Titans), North Texas defensive tackle Brandon Kennedy (Broncos), West Virginia linebacker Grant Wiley (Vikings) and Bowling Green cornerback Janssen Patton (Steelers).

As for the big winners and losers in NFL Draft 2004, here's a club-by-club analysis:

AFC EAST

BUFFALO BILLS

After missing out on one of the top three QBs, the Bills turned to WR **Lee Evans** to fill the need for a legitimate threat opposite Eric Moulds. Still in need of a quarterback of the future, Buffalo traded three picks, including a No. 1 next year, to Dallas in order to select **J. P. Losman**. **Tim Anderson** is an under rated run-stopper who will provide depth. **Tim Euhus** excels as a receiver, but must improve his blocking skills. The surprise here was that the team failed to address the need at cornerback. **Grade: C**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	13	Evans, Lee	WR	5-10	197	Wisconsin
1	22	Losman, J.P.	QB	6-2	217	Tulane
3	11	Anderson, Tim	DT	6-3	304	Ohio State
4	13	Euhus, Tim	TE	6-4	247	Oregon State
7	6	McFarland, Dylan	T	6-6	290	Montana
7	13	Smith, Jonathan	RB	5-7	188	Washington State

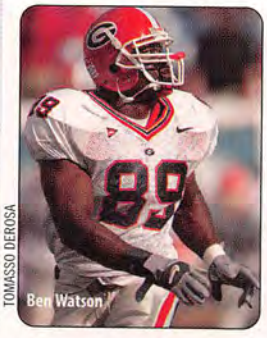
MIAMI DOLPHINS

Thinking the Vikings would select **Vernon Carey**, the Dolphins gave up a No. 4 to move up one slot to select the Miami Hurricanes' massive offensive lineman. One of the biggest sliders in this draft was CB **Will Poole** due to character concerns. **Tony Bua** is an extremely aggressive player who should contribute on special teams. Offensive tackle **Tony Pape** was a solid value in the final round and should compete with John St. Clair at right tackle. The trade for QB A.J. Feeley also figures into this draft. **Grade: C**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	19	Carey, Vernon	G	6-4	363	Miami (FL)
4	6	Poole, Will	CB	5-10	193	USC
5	28	Bua, Tony	S	5-11	218	Arkansas
6	9	Hadnot, Rex	C	6-2	323	Houston
7	20	Pape, Tony	G	6-6	323	Michigan
7	21	Pope, Derrick	LB	6-1	226	Alabama

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

The Patriots could not have been happier to see DT **Vince Wilfork** slide to No. 21 overall. "Baby Sapp" will ease the free-agency loss of Ted Washington and solidify the team's run defense. Tight end **Ben Watson** is a tremendous natural athlete, but must convert athletic ability into productivity. Defensive end **Marquise Hill** has great size and potential, but will need time to develop. **Guss Scott** and **Dexter Reid** will provide depth at safety and show starting potential. Halfback **Cedric Cobbs** shows good running skills, but must stay healthy. Wide receiver **P.K. Sam** is an underclassman who is just beginning to reach his potential. Keep an



Ben Watson

TOMASSO DEROSA

ABOVE: TOMASSO DEROSA (7)

eye on **Christian Morton** of Illinois. The former QB teamed well with Eugene Wilson, now playing FS in New England, in 2001 when he recorded 70 tackles, four interceptions and 26 passes broken up. **Grade: B+**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	21	Wilfork, Vince	DT	6-1	344	Miami (FL)
1	32	Watson, Ben	TE	6-3	253	Georgia
2	31	Hill, Marquise	DE	6-6	297	LSU
3	32	Scott, Guss	S	5-10	198	Florida
4	17	Reid, Dexter	S	5-10	203	North Carolina
4	32	Cobbs, Cedric	RB	6-0	221	Arkansas
5	32	Sam, P.K.	WR	6-1	196	Florida State
7	32	Morton, Christian	CB	6-0	188	Illinois

NEW YORK JETS

Jonathan Vilma fills the need for speed in the middle of the Jets' defense. One of the best values of the entire draft was CB **Derrick Strait** in the third round. Concerns regarding his skills in man coverage caused the slide. Look for Strait to have a better pro career than several of the corners selected before him. The Jets have been looking for a bigger and more physical receiver and **Jerricho Cotchery** should prove to be a solid No. 2 or No. 3 receiver for Chad Pennington. Offensive tackle **Adrian Jones**, S **Erik Coleman**, HB **Derrick Ward** and S **Rashad Washington** are expected to provide depth. **Grade: C**

BOB LEVERONE/TSN/ICON SMI

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	12	Vilma, Jonathan	LB	6-1	223	Miami (FL)
3	13	Strait, Derrick	CB	5-11	189	Oklahoma
4	12	Cotchery, Jerricho	WR	6-0	199	North Carolina State
4	36	Jones, Adrian	T	6-4	296	Kansas
5	11	Coleman, Erik	S	5-10	200	Washington State
6	13	Cavka, Marko	T	6-7	294	Sacramento State
7	12	McClover, Darrell	LB	6-0	226	Miami (FL)
7	33	Johnson, Trevor	DE	6-4	260	Nebraska
7	34	Ward, Derrick	RB	5-11	233	Ottawa
7	35	Washington, Rashad	S	6-1	217	Kansas State

AFC NORTH

BALTIMORE RAVENS

Without a first-round selection, Baltimore waited until the middle of Round Two to make its first selection, NT **Dwan Edwards**. He excels versus the run and will share time with Kelly Gregg. The urgent need for a wide receiver or two was addressed with the selection of **Devard Darling** and the trade with Jacksonville for Kevin Johnson. Defensive end/OLB **Roderick Green** is a pass-rush specialist who will need time to develop. Athletic QB **Josh Harris** will carry the clipboard next season. **Clarence Moore** is a big, athletic receiver, while **Derek Abney** excels in the return game. **Brian Rimpf** was one of the more underrated linemen in the draft and a very good value in the final round. **Grade: B**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
2	19	Edwards, Dwan	DT	6-2	309	Oregon State
3	19	Darling, Devard	WR	6-1	213	Washington State
5	21	Green, Roderick	LB	6-2	243	Central Missouri State
6	22	Harris, Josh	QB	6-1	238	Bowling Green
6	34	Moore, Clarence	WR	6-5	211	Northern Arizona
7	43	Abney, Derek	WR	5-9	171	Kentucky
7	45	Rimpf, Brian	T	6-5	319	East Carolina

CINCINNATI BENGALS

After dealing Corey Dillon, Cincinnati added insurance behind Rudi Johnson in RB **Chris Perry**. **Keiwan Ratliff** is a big-play corner and a good fit considering the uncertain status of Dennis Weathersby. With the selection obtained for Dillon, big-hitting **Madieu Williams** was added to compete with FS Kim Herring. Although both were selected a bit higher than projected, **Caleb Miller** and **Landon Johnson** are expected to provide depth at linebacker. Richard Seigler or Rod Davis might have been better values there. One of the most intriguing selections in the entire draft was the Bengals' fourth-round pick of OT **Stacy Andrews** of Ole Miss. Primarily a track athlete, he did not play football until 2002 and played in just five games as a collegian. **Grade: B+**

CHRIS BERNACCHI/SPORTPICS

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	26	Perry, Chris	RB	6-0	224	Michigan
2	17	Ratliff, Keiwan	CB	5-10	187	Florida
2	24	Williams, Madieu	S	6-0	190	Maryland
3	17	Miller, Caleb	LB	6-3	225	Arkansas
3	33	Johnson, Landon	LB	6-1	223	Purdue
4	18	Askew, Matthias	DT	6-5	308	Michigan State
4	21	Geathers, Robert	DE	6-2	273	Georgia
4	27	Andrews, Stacy	T	6-5	346	Mississippi
5	17	Mann, Maurice	WR	6-1	191	Nevada
6	18	Brooks, Greg	CB	5-10	179	Southern Mississippi
7	17	Bramlet, Casey	QB	6-3	225	Wyoming

CLEVELAND BROWNS

In one of the most aggressive moves of the draft, Cleveland sent its No. 2 to Detroit for the chance to move up one spot to select TE **Kellen Winslow**. The Browns were taking no chances on missing out on Winslow and did what they felt necessary to land their guy. After making a trade with the Colts to get back into the second round, the team selected **Sean Jones** to compete for one of the safety positions next fall. The second day of the draft did little to excite. The top pick was sixth-round OT **Kirk Chambers**, who should provide depth behind oft-injured Ross Verba. The selections of Winslow and Jones were outstanding, but the team's inability to upgrade a weak offensive line lowers the final grade. **Grade: B**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	6	Winslow Jr., Kellen	TE	6-4	243	Miami (FL)
2	27	Jones, Sean	S	6-1	212	Georgia
4	10	McCown, Luke	QB	6-3	208	Louisiana Tech
5	29	Gordon, Amon	DE	6-2	302	Stanford
6	11	Chambers, Kirk	T	6-7	313	Stanford
7	7	Echemandu, Adimchinobe	RB	5-10	226	California

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

For the first time since Mark Malone in 1980, Pittsburgh used a first-round choice to select a quarterback, **Ben Roethlisberger**. He is the best athlete of the three top quarterbacks and has the greatest upside and potential. **Ricardo Colclough**, a corner from tiny, Division II Tusculum, was added to upgrade a very suspect secondary. Adding to his value are outstanding skills as a return man. **Max Starks** and **Bo Lacy** have been two of the best left tackles in the SEC the last three seasons and should help the depth along the offensive line. Starks lacks the quick feet to remain at LOT, but should be an effective starter at ROG

DELANE B. ROUSE/ICON SMI

or ROT. **Nathaniel Adibi** played DE in college, but projects to OLB in the Steelers' 3-4 defense. **Grade: B**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	11	Roethlisberger, Ben	QB	6-4	242	Miami (OH)
2	6	Colclough, Ricardo	CB	5-10	186	Tusculum
3	12	Starks, Max	T	6-7	359	Florida
5	13	Adibi, Nathaniel	DE	6-3	255	Virginia Tech
6	12	Lacy, Bo	T	6-4	294	Arkansas
6	29	Kranchick, Matt	TE	6-6	258	Penn State
6	32	Caylor, Drew	C	6-5	288	Stanford
7	11	Taylor, Eric	DT	6-2	302	Memphis

AFC SOUTH

HOUSTON TEXANS

The Texans entered the draft looking to upgrade the defense and ended up using their first seven selections on that side of the ball. **Dunta Robinson** is a physical, shutdown corner who is expected to start immediately opposite Aaron Glenn, allowing Marcus Coleman to slide inside to safety. **Jason Babin** was a dominating DE the last two seasons in the MAC, but at just 6-2, 260 pounds, he projects to OLB in the Texans' 3-4 defense. On Day Two, Houston added a pair of Notre Dame defensive backs in CB **Vontez Duff** and S **Glenn Earl**. A player to keep an eye on is early seventh-rounder **Raheem Orr**, an athletic 6-4, 260-pound DE who could help put pressure on opposing quarterbacks. **Grade: B**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	10	Robinson, Dunta	CB	5-10	186	South Carolina
1	27	Babin, Jason	DE	6-2	260	Western Michigan
4	26	Earl, Glenn	S	6-1	222	Notre Dame
6	5	Duff, Vontez	CB	5-10	203	Notre Dame
6	10	Lord, Jammal	S	6-2	220	Nebraska
6	35	Anderson, Charlie	LB	6-4	240	Mississippi
7	9	Orr, Raheem	DE	6-4	260	Rutgers
7	10	Thomas, Sloan	WR	6-1	203	Texas
7	47	Symons, B.J.	QB	6-0	210	Texas Tech

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

After starting with two questionable selections in S **Bob Sanders** and TE **Ben Hartsock**, Indianapolis finally began addressing positions of need with **Gilbert Gardner** and **Kendyll Pope** at OLB and **Jason David** and **Von Hutchins** at CB. Although Sanders and Hartsock are quality prospects, safety and tight end are two of the stronger positions on the Colts' roster. Although undersized, David is very well schooled and considered one of the more underrated prospects at corner. It would not be a surprise to see him start for the Colts as a rookie. **Jake Scott** is a versatile lineman who can play any of the five offensive line positions and will provide much-needed depth. **Grade: C-**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
2	12	Sanders, Bob	S	5-8	204	Iowa
3	5	Hartsock, Ben	TE	6-3	264	Ohio State
3	6	Gardner, Gilbert	LB	6-1	229	Purdue
4	11	Pope, Kendyll	LB	6-1	220	Florida State
4	29	David, Jason	CB	5-8	168	Washington State
5	9	Scott, Jake	T	6-4	281	Idaho
6	8	Hutchins, Von	CB	5-9	179	Mississippi
6	28	Sorgi, Jim	QB	6-3	194	Wisconsin
7	28	Kimball, David	K	6-1	209	Penn State

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

The team hurt most by the last-minute court ruling to exclude RB Maurice Clarett and WR Mike Williams from this draft was Jacksonville. Due to this decision, the Jaguars shifted gears and went with the next-best receiver, **Reggie Williams**. **Daryl Smith** was added in the second round and should allow Mike Peterson to slide outside to his more natural weakside position at linebacker. Once considered a top-10 talent, Florida State RB **Greg Jones** slipped all the way to No. 55 overall due to a major knee injury in 2002. At the very least, he will be a solid backup for Fred Taylor, but it would not be a surprise to see him become a solid starter in a year or two. **Jorge Cordova** is a pass-rush specialist who will need to make the transition back to linebacker. Defensive end was considered a position of urgent need for Jacksonville going into the draft, but the team failed to address the position until the end of Round Seven with **Bobby McCray**. He is coming off an impressive senior season at Florida, but character concerns led to his slide. **Grade: B**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	9	Williams, Reggie	WR	6-3	223	Washington
2	7	Smith, Daryl	LB	6-1	234	Georgia Tech
2	23	Jones, Greg	RB	6-1	250	Florida State
3	23	Cordova, Jorge	LB	6-1	241	Nevada
4	22	Maddox, Anthony	DT	6-2	308	Delta State
4	24	Wilford, Ernest	WR	6-3	220	Virginia Tech
5	5	Scobee, Josh	K	6-1	191	Louisiana Tech
5	18	Thompson, Chris	CB	6-0	191	Nicholls State
5	27	Bubin, Sean	T	6-6	306	Illinois
7	48	McCray, Bobby	DE	6-5	252	Florida

TENNESSEE TITANS

Because of the salary cap, player retirements and free-agency losses, the Titans' front office had its hands full trying to rebuild the roster. Helping the cause, the team had 13 draft choices to work with. **Ben Troupe** is expected to replace Frank Wycheck at TE. To replace Jevon Kearse, the team drafted **Travis LaBoy**, **Antwan Odom** and **Bo Schobel**. To replace Robaire Smith, the team drafted **Randy Starks** and **Jared Clauss**. Cornerbacks **Rich Gardner** and **Michael Waddell** will provide depth. **Jacob Bell** is an underrated guard who will eventually start in this league. **Robert Reynolds** is a versatile athlete who can play any of three linebacking positions. **Troy Fleming** is a FB/HB 'tweener who has some traits similar to Eddie George. **Grade: A**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
2	8	Troupe, Ben	TE	6-4	262	Florida
2	10	LaBoy, Travis	DE	6-3	253	Hawaii
2	25	Odom, Antwan	DE	6-4	277	Alabama
3	8	Starks, Randy	DT	6-3	307	Maryland
3	29	Gardner, Rich	CB	5-10	199	Penn State
4	7	Schobel, Bo	DE	6-5	264	TCU
4	28	Waddell, Michael	CB	5-10	187	North Carolina
5	6	Bell, Jacob	G	6-4	306	Miami (OH)
5	33	Reynolds, Robert	LB	6-3	242	Ohio State
6	26	Fleming, Troy	RB	6-0	230	Tennessee
7	29	Clauss, Jared	DT	6-4	294	Iowa
7	38	Amano, Eugene	C	6-3	295	Southeast Missouri St.
7	40	McHugh, Sean	RB	6-5	264	Penn State

AFC WEST

DENVER BRONCOS

With John Mobley's health a concern and Ian Gold unlikely to return, the Broncos' primary need was at OLB. Although in our opinion Karlos Dansby was a better prospect (better size and instincts), **D.J. Williams** should make his way into the starting lineup as a rookie. **Tatum Bell** is a tremendous athlete who should excel behind the Denver offensive line, but he must eliminate the fumbles. Underrated **Darius Watts** was one of the most polished receivers in this draft and should team well with Rod Smith and Ashley Lelie. **Jeremy LeSueur** has the physical ability and versatility to play corner or safety. A second-day selection to keep an eye on is Pitt HB **Brandon Miree**. Denver has a knack for finding quality backs later on draft day and Miree could be the back this year. **Grade: C**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	17	Williams, D.J.	LB	6-0	247	Miami (FL)
2	9	Bell, Tatum	RB	5-11	212	Oklahoma State
2	22	Watts, Darius	WR	6-1	188	Marshall
3	22	LeSueur, Jeremy	CB	6-0	197	Michigan
5	20	Shoate, Jeff	CB	5-10	189	San Diego State
6	6	Luke, Triandos	WR	5-10	189	Alabama
6	25	Sewell, Josh	C	6-2	300	Nebraska
7	24	Mauck, Matt	QB	6-1	213	LSU
7	46	Miree, Brandon	RB	5-11	237	Pittsburgh
7	49	Van Pelt, Bradlee	QB	6-2	223	Colorado State

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

One of the biggest reaches of the draft was the selection of **Junior Siavii** at No. 36 overall. Although a massive, run-stopping DT, his productivity has been unimpressive and he will be a project. Making things worse, the team passed on proven players like Randy Starks, Darnell Dockett and Dwan Edwards in making that selection. **Kris Wilson** excels as a receiver and will eventually replace TE Tony Gonzalez. **Keyaron Fox** is a big-play OLB who will push Shawn Barber for time on the weakside. **Samie Parker** and **Jeris McIntyre** are speed receivers who will bring more big-play ability to the already-explosive Kansas City offense. A fourth-round sleeper to keep an eye on is Idaho State's super-productive DE **Jared Allen**. **Grade: C-**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
2	4	Siavii, Junior	DT	6-4	333	Oregon
2	29	Wilson, Kris	TE	6-1	246	Pittsburgh
3	30	Fox, Keyaron	LB	6-2	227	Georgia Tech
4	9	Parker, Samie	WR	5-10	178	Oregon
4	30	Allen, Jared	DE	6-6	265	Idaho State
6	30	McIntyre, Jeris	WR	5-11	203	Auburn
7	30	Sampson, Kevin	T	6-4	312	Syracuse

OAKLAND RAIDERS

Although it would not have surprised anyone to see the Raiders trade down in the first round, Oakland chose to stay at No. 2 overall and select Robert Gallery. He is a can't-miss prospect and can be expected to start 10-plus seasons at left tackle. The team stayed on the offensive line in Round Two and selected Virginia Tech center **Jake Grove**. It would not be entirely unexpected to see Gallery and Grove in the starting lineup to open this season. **Stuart Schweigert** has been a highly productive player since his freshman season in the Big Ten and will eventually replace FS Rod Woodson. Oakland wanted to get younger and faster at wide receiver and the additions of **Carlos Francis** and **Johnnie Morant** will do just that. **Shawn Johnson** has been an effective pass rusher and can be expected to provide depth at DE. **Grade: B**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	2	Gallery, Robert	T	6-7	323	Iowa
2	13	Grove, Jake	C	6-3	300	Virginia Tech
3	4	Schweigert, Stuart	S	6-1	212	Purdue
4	3	Francis, Carlos	WR	5-9	198	Texas Tech
5	2	Morant, Johnnie	WR	6-4	229	Syracuse
6	1	Johnson, Shawn	DE	6-4	273	Delaware
6	17	Spencer, Cody	LB	6-2	242	North Texas
7	44	Anderson, Courtney	TE	6-6	269	San Jose State
7	54	Sommersell, Andre	LB	6-2	227	Colorado State

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

The drama began a few days before the draft when it became known that Eli Manning did not want to play in San Diego. Despite this, San Diego selected Manning No. 1 overall and was preparing for a long fight to get him signed. About an hour later, after the Giants selected **Philip Rivers**, the quarterback the Chargers preferred all along, the two teams finally completed the much anticipated trade allowing San Diego to add a first-round selection next year.

After releasing both defensive ends from last season, the Chargers needed help along the line and drafted **Igor Olshansky** and **Dave Ball**. **Shaun Phillips** played DE for Purdue, but projects to OLB in the Chargers' 3-4 defense. **Michael Turner** was a solid value and should be a solid backup for franchise RB LaDainian Tomlinson. While OT was a primary need, the team waited until the seventh round to finally address the position. It would not be a surprise to see the Chargers start **Shane Olivea** and **Carlos Joseph** at tackle in 2004. Although filling a position of need, Iowa K **Nate Kaeding** was a major reach at the top of the third round. The team did well in recovering from the Manning situation. **Grade: C+**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	4	Rivers, Philip	QB	6-4	226	North Carolina State
2	3	Olshansky, Igor	DT	6-5	309	Oregon
3	2	Kaeding, Nate	K	6-0	187	Iowa
3	3	Hardwick, Nick	C	6-3	283	Purdue
4	2	Phillips, Shaun	DE	6-2	252	Purdue
5	1	Ball, Dave	DE	6-5	277	UCLA
5	22	Turner, Michael	RB	5-10	237	Northern Illinois
6	4	Krause, Ryan	TE	6-2	244	Nebraska-Omaha
7	3	Bingham, Ryon	DT	6-3	303	Nebraska
7	8	Olivea, Shane	T	6-2	312	Ohio State
7	53	Joseph, Carlos	T	6-6	342	Miami (FL)

NFC EAST

DALLAS COWBOYS

After the top running back in this draft, Oregon State's Steven Jackson, surprisingly slid to them at No. 22 overall, the Cowboys decided to trade the selection to Buffalo for picks, including a No. 1 in 2005. When Dallas finally made its first selection in Round Two, it selected Notre Dame's **Julius Jones** to replace Troy Hambrick as the feature back. Offensive tackle **Jacob Rogers** and OG **Stephen Peterman** were the other first-day selections who will eventually start. **Bruce Thornton**, **Nathan Jones** and **Jacques Reeves** were second-day cornerback selections who will help in filling the free-agency loss of Mario Edwards. It was surprising to see the Cowboys pass on Oklahoma CB Derrick Strait in the second round, and it remains to be seen who will start opposite Terence Newman in the Dallas secondary. Passing on Jackson and failing to add a starting corner lowered the final grade. **Grade: C-**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
2	11	Jones, Julius	RB	5-9	217	Notre Dame
2	20	Rogers, Jacob	T	6-5	305	USC
3	20	Peterman, Stephen	G	6-3	312	LSU
4	25	Thornton, Bruce	CB	5-10	192	Georgia
5	12	Ryan, Sean	TE	6-4	264	Boston College
7	4	Jones, Nathan	CB	5-10	180	Rutgers
7	15	Crayton, Patrick	WR	6-1	205	Northwestern Okla. St.
7	22	Reeves, Jacques	CB	5-11	188	Purdue

NEW YORK GIANTS

After San Diego selected **Eli Manning** No. 1 overall, the drama began to unfold when the Giants picked Philip Rivers. It was no secret the Chargers coveted Rivers and the Giants Manning. There had been speculation for weeks that the two teams would pull off a trade. But not until the Giants were on the clock did a deal finally appear imminent. When the dust settled, the Giants got their man in Ole Miss QB Manning, but the team had to pay a steep price to add his services, especially considering Ben Roethlisberger and Rivers carried a comparable grade. Offensive guard **Chris Snee** was added at the top of Round Two to fill a hole along the offensive line. **Gibril Wilson** will provide much-needed depth in the secondary. The most interesting pick came in the final round with Hampton DE **Isaac Hilton**. He is a tremendous natural athlete with pass-rush potential, but will need time to develop. The price was extremely high for Manning and the team failed to fill needs at offensive tackle and linebacker. **Grade: C-**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	1	Manning, Eli	QB	6-4	218	Mississippi
2	2	Snee, Chris	G	6-2	314	Boston College
4	1	Torbor, Reggie	DE	6-2	254	Auburn
5	4	Wilson, Gibril	S	6-0	197	Tennessee
6	3	Taylor, Jamaar	WR	6-0	197	Texas A&M
7	2	Strojny, Drew	T	6-7	327	Duke
7	52	Hilton, Isaac	DE	6-3	251	Hampton

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

While the team appeared solid at offensive tackle going into the draft, Philadelphia surprised everyone by selecting OT **Shawn Andrews** despite having OLB D.J. Williams, DE Will Smith, OG Vernon Carey and OLB Karlos Dansby still on the board. Andrews is expected to start at guard initially before eventually replacing Jon Runyan at right tackle. With their next two selections, the Eagles addressed a need for depth in the secondary with the additions of **Matt Ware** and **J.R. Reed**. After blasting the Eagles organization during the days leading up to the draft, it was a given that OG John Welbourn would be dealt on draft day. He went to Kansas City for FB **Thomas Tapeh** and a second-day selection in 2005. A second-day pick to keep an eye on is **Adrien Clarke**. He is a versatile lineman from Ohio State with experience at both guard and tackle. **Grade: C**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	16	Andrews, Shawn	T	6-4	373	Arkansas
3	26	Ware, Matt	S	6-2	209	UCLA
4	33	Reed, J.R.	S	5-10	201	South Florida
4	35	Darilek, Trey	G	6-4	301	UTEP
5	30	Tapeh, Thomas	RB	6-1	245	Minnesota
6	20	Hall, Andy	QB	6-1	218	Delaware
6	27	Wynn, Dexter	CB	5-9	175	Colorado State
7	26	Clarke, Adrien	G	6-4	334	Ohio State
7	41	Perry, Bruce	RB	5-7	196	Maryland
7	42	Furio, Dominic	C	6-3	295	UNLV

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

With just four selections to work with, the Redskins had to make each pick count. It was a difficult decision at No. 5 overall between Kellen Winslow and **Sean Taylor**, but the need at safety won out. Taylor would end up being the first of six Miami Hurricanes selected in the first round. Tight end was addressed in the third round with **Chris Cooley** of Utah State. With their final two selections, depth at OT was upgraded with **Mark Wilson** and **Jim Molinaro**. The other

2004 draft choices used to acquire HB Clinton Portis, QB Mark Brunell, DT Lional Dalton and DT Martin Chase have to be figured into the final grade. **Grade: B+**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	5	Taylor, Sean	S	6-2	231	Miami (FL)
3	18	Cooley, Chris	TE	6-3	265	Utah State
5	19	Wilson, Mark	T	6-6	314	California
6	15	Molinaro, Jim	T	6-6	309	Notre Dame

NFC NORTH

CHICAGO BEARS

The Bears entered the draft wanting to add quick, attacking defenders and benefited from the slide of defensive linemen. They were able to select the top-rated lineman in this draft, DT **Tommie Harris**. While his productivity numbers are not eye-catching, he is technically sound and displays tremendous quickness off the ball. Fast-rising **Terry Johnson** was added in Round Two and should team well with Harris in providing a difficult inside matchup for offenses. Injuries and poor play from the QB position caused WR **Bernard Berrian** to slide since his tremendous 2002 season when he teamed with David Carr at Fresno State. **Nathan Vasher** comes off a solid career at Texas, but slid in the postseason due to disappointing all-star performances and poor workouts. A second-day player to keep an eye on is Pitt DE **Claude Harriott**. He was considered a first-round talent following the 2002 season, but disappointed as a senior. If he can regain some of his explosiveness, he will give the Bears another solid pass rusher. **Grade: B+**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	14	Harris, Tommie	DT	6-2	289	Oklahoma
2	15	Johnson, Terry	DT	6-2	283	Washington
3	15	Berrian, Bernard	WR	6-1	183	Fresno State
4	14	Vasher, Nathan	CB	5-10	177	Texas
4	16	Joe, Leon	LB	5-11	232	Maryland
5	15	Harriott, Claude	DE	6-3	271	Pittsburgh
5	16	Krenzel, Craig	QB	6-3	227	Ohio State
7	14	Marshall, Alfonso	CB	6-1	183	Miami (FL)

DETROIT LIONS

The biggest winner in this draft was Detroit. The Lions were able to add three first-year starters in WR **Roy Williams**, HB **Kevin Jones** and OLB **Teddy Lehman**. Williams has been a star since his freshman season and should be a very difficult matchup teaming with Charles Rogers and Tai Streets. Jones provides the big-play ability that has been missing from the Lion offense since Barry Sanders walked away from the game. Lehman is an intelligent football player who can play any of the linebacker positions. All three carried a first-round grade going into the draft and fill positions of need. With their final first-day selection, the Lions selected **Keith Smith**, a quality cover corner who will need to make a big step up in competition after playing college ball at I-AA McNeese State. The highlight of the second day was the sixth-round pick of OT **Kelly Butler** of Purdue. Although not a position of urgent need, he is an athletic big man who was considered a first-day talent going into the draft. **Grade: A**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	7	Williams, Roy	WR	6-2	212	Texas
1	30	Jones, Kevin	RB	5-11	221	Virginia Tech
2	5	Lehman, Teddy	LB	6-1	238	Oklahoma
3	10	Smith, Keith	CB	5-11	192	McNeese State
5	8	Lewis, Alex	LB	5-11	227	Wisconsin
6	7	Butler, Kelly	T	6-7	334	Purdue

GREEN BAY PACKERS

With their first two selections in this draft, the Packers looked to upgrade at cornerback with the additions of **Ahmad "Batman" Carroll** and **Joey Thomas**. Carroll has blazing 4.3 speed, but stands just 5-9 and may struggle versus the big and physical receivers in the NFC North. Thomas has better size and decent speed, but will need to make the significant step up in level of competition from I-AA Montana State. **Donnell Washington** and **Corey Williams** were added to provide depth inside at defensive tackle. While both have impressive physical ability and outstanding potential, neither has been able to put it all together on the football field. Ohio State's **B.J. Sander** was selected in the third round to replace Josh Bidwell as the team's punter. Green Bay failed to address an urgent need at defensive end. **Grade: C-**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	25	Carroll, Ahmad	CB	5-9	193	Arkansas
3	7	Thomas, Joey	CB	6-0	195	Montana State
3	9	Washington, Donnell	DT	6-5	323	Clemson
3	24	Sander, B.J.	P	6-3	222	Ohio State
6	14	Williams, Corey	DT	6-3	313	Arkansas State
7	50	Wells, Scott	C	6-1	300	Tennessee

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

In one of the biggest surprises of Round One, DE **Kenechi Udeze** slid from a likely top-10 selection all the way to No. 20 overall. He has dominated Pac-10 competition the last two seasons for Southern Cal and fills a position of urgent need for the Vikings. **Dontarrious Thomas** was added in the second round to fill the need at weakside linebacker. Another defensive lineman was added in the third round in **Darrion Scott**. Offensive tackle **Nat Dorsey** was a three-year starter in the ACC and will provide depth. **Mewelde Moore** was a highly productive runner, receiver and return man the last four seasons at Tulane. The incredibly productive **Rod Davis** is expected to backup E.J. Henderson at MLB. **Deandre Eiland** has size, speed and the ability to play corner or safety. **Jeff Dugan** was one of the best blocking tight ends in this draft. Like last year, the Vikings went with proven college players throughout and should see all of their selections make the final roster. **Grade: A**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	20	Udeze, Kenechi	DE	6-3	287	USC
2	16	Thomas, Dontarrious	LB	6-2	241	Auburn
3	25	Scott, Darrion	DE	6-3	271	Ohio State
4	19	Dorsey, Nat	T	6-7	322	Georgia Tech
4	23	Moore, Mewelde	RB	5-10	205	Tulane
5	23	Davis, Rod	LB	6-2	239	Southern Mississippi
6	19	Eiland, Deandre'	S	5-11	202	South Carolina
7	19	Dugan, Jeff	TE	6-3	258	Maryland

NFC SOUTH

ATLANTA FALCONS

With Ray Buchanan, Juran Bolden and Tyrone Williams no longer with the team, the Falcons needed to add a shutdown corner in Virginia Tech's **DeAngelo Hall**. Atlanta later traded up to add WR **Michael Jenkins** with the 29th pick overall. Mike Vick now has an improved group of receivers to work with in Peerless Price, Dez White and Jenkins. When Vick went down to injury last season, the team really struggled. Third-rounder **Matt Schaub** of Virginia is expected to improve depth at the QB spot. **Demorrio Williams** is a speed linebacker who chases plays sideline to sideline. Tackle **Chad Lavalais** was a standout on the dominant LSU defense last season. Safety **Etric Pruitt** was an extremely productive collegian who plays like an extra linebacker. Seventh-rounder **Quincy Wilson**, the son of former Chicago Bear LB Otis Wilson, is a tough and determined runner who will provide depth. **Grade: A-**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	8	Hall, DeAngelo	CB	5-10	197	Virginia Tech
1	29	Jenkins, Michael	WR	6-4	217	Ohio State
3	27	Schaub, Matt	QB	6-5	237	Virginia
4	5	Williams, Demorrio	LB	6-0	232	Nebraska
5	10	Lavalais, Chad	DT	6-1	293	LSU
6	21	Pruitt, Etric	S	6-0	197	Southern Mississippi
7	18	Wilson, Quincy	RB	5-9	225	West Virginia

CAROLINA PANTHERS

The Panthers' primary need going into the draft was at cornerback and the team was fortunate that **Chris Gamble** was still available at the end of the first round. While still learning the position, he has the athletic ability to become a shutdown corner. While Mike Williams got much of the publicity, **Keary Colbert** simply came up with big play after big play in his Southern Cal career. He will push for playing time opposite Steve Smith. **Travelle Wharton** was a 44-game starter in the SEC and will be a valued OT/OG swingman. Wide receiver **Drew Carter** combines very good size (6-3) and blazing speed (4.4), but must stay healthy. **Sean Tufts** is a good athlete who can play any of the three LB positions. **Grade: C+**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	28	Gamble, Chris	CB	6-1	181	Ohio State
2	30	Colbert, Keary	WR	5-10	193	USC
3	31	Wharton, Travelle	T	6-3	312	South Carolina
5	31	Carter, Drew	WR	6-3	200	Ohio State
6	31	Tufts, Sean	LB	6-3	236	Colorado
7	31	Gaines, Michael	TE	6-2	275	UCF

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

One of the most confusing selections of Round One was the selection of Ohio State DE **Will Smith** by New Orleans. With Charles Grant and Darren Howard already penciled in as starters at the position, it will be interesting to watch and see how Smith is used. Wide receiver **Devery Henderson** was added in the second round, but it remains to be seen how he will be used behind Joe Horn, Jerome Pathon and Donte Stallworth. The team finally looked to fill a team need with the addition of **Courtney Watson** late in the second round. He is an instinctive player who can line up at any of the linebacker positions. **Rodney Leisle** will be a backup at DT while **Mike Karney** will play behind aging FB Sam Gash. Once again the Saints looked past their need at cornerback, failing to draft a young corner for the second year in a row. **Grade: C-**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	18	Smith, Will	DE	6-3	267	Ohio State
2	18	Henderson, Devery	WR	5-11	191	LSU
2	28	Watson, Courtney	LB	6-1	237	Notre Dame
5	7	Leisle, Rodney	DT	6-3	309	UCLA
5	24	Karney, Mike	RB	5-11	254	Arizona State
7	39	Bockwoldt, Colby	LB	6-1	230	Brigham Young

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

Considering the fact that DT Vince Wilfork, OLB D.J. Williams and HB Steven Jackson were still available, it was a bit of a surprise that Tampa Bay selected WR **Michael Clayton**. While Clayton is a physical receiver with outstanding body control, he lacks what is sorely missing in the Buccaneers' offense—speed. **Marquis Cooper** was added in the third round to address the need at linebacker. **Will Allen** was a solid value in the fourth round and should eventually start at free safety. North Carolina OG **Jeb Terry** is a solid technician and will earn a spot on the 53-man roster. **Mark Jones** was a two-way performer at CB and WR for Tennessee who will need to find his place. **Lenny Williams** was a big-time playmaker in the I-AA SWAC and could surprise in the secondary. **Grade: C-**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	15	Clayton, Michael	WR	6-3	197	LSU
3	16	Cooper, Marquis	LB	6-2	213	Washington
4	15	Allen, Will	S	6-1	193	Ohio State
5	14	Terry, Jeb	G	6-5	311	North Carolina
6	16	Lawrie, Nate	TE	6-5	262	Yale
7	5	Jones, Mark	WR	5-9	185	Tennessee
7	27	Cramer, Casey	RB	6-2	235	Dartmouth
7	51	Williams, Lenny	CB	6-0	190	Southern University

NFC WEST

ARIZONA CARDINALS

Dennis Green got the player he coveted all along in **Larry Fitzgerald**. The sophomore WR from Pitt will be an immediate starter and should team well with Anquan Boldin and Bryant Johnson in the Cardinals' three-wideout sets. **Karlos Dansby** was the top OLB in this draft and a solid value at the top of Round Two. Defensive lineman **Darnell Dockett** was a first-round talent, but slid to Round Three due to character concerns. **Alex Stepanovich** and **Nick Leckey** were solid second-day selections who will upgrade the depth inside at center and guard, respectively. **John Navarre** should prove to be a solid No. 3 QB behind Josh McCown and Shaun King. **Grade: B+**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	3	Fitzgerald, Larry	WR	6-2	223	Pittsburgh
2	1	Dansby, Karlos	LB	6-3	251	Auburn
3	1	Dockett, Darnell	DE	6-3	277	Florida State
4	4	Stepanovich, Alex	C	6-3	301	Ohio State
5	3	Smith, Antonio	DE	6-3	274	Oklahoma State
6	2	Leckey, Nick	C	6-2	290	Kansas State
7	1	Navarre, John	QB	6-6	246	Michigan

ST. LOUIS RAMS

One of the most difficult teams to figure out in recent years is St. Louis. While there is no questioning the talent level of Oregon State RB **Steven Jackson**, you have to question why the team would draft just one defensive end considering the loss of Grant Wistrom and the off-the-field troubles of Leonard Little. Jackson is an outstanding talent—he will eventually be a solid replacement for Marshall Faulk when he retires—but there were more urgent needs to address this season. The one selection at DE was **Tony Hargrove**, but he played just two seasons for Georgia Tech and missed last year due to academics. On the plus side, **Jason Shivers** was an outstanding value and should eventually replace FS Aeneas Williams. **Brandon Chillar** is a blue-collar LB who is not flashy but makes plays. **Jeff Smoker** will be the No. 3 QB this season behind Marc Bulger and Chris Chandler. **Grade: C+**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	24	Jackson, Steven	RB	6-2	233	Oregon State
3	28	Hargrove, Tony	DE	6-4	274	Georgia Tech
4	34	Chillar, Brandon	LB	6-2	253	UCLA
5	26	Shivers, Jason	S	6-0	201	Arizona State
6	36	Smoker, Jeff	QB	6-3	223	Michigan State
7	36	Jensen, Erik	TE	6-3	259	Iowa
7	37	Turner, Larry	T	6-3	296	Eastern Kentucky

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

After losing Terrell Owens and Tai Streets, the 49ers restocked the WR position with **Rashaun Woods** and **Derrick Hamilton**. Both are coming off solid college careers and should be effective receivers in the San Francisco passing game. **Justin Smiley** was one of the top offensive guards in this draft and will start immediately. **Shawntae Spencer** was a fast riser in the weeks leading up the draft and provides depth at cornerback. **Isaac Sopoaga** is a powerhouse who should eventually be able to replace Junior Bryant at DT. **Richard Seigler** is a productive ILB who will provide quality depth behind Derek Smith. **Andy Lee** is expected to assume the punting responsibilities. Oregon DB **Keith Lewis** is a special-teams standout with a knack for blocking kicks. **Cody Pickett** had the look of a first-day talent entering the 2003 season, but slid all the way to the final round. With some coaching and refinement, he is easily the most athletic of the San Francisco quarterbacks and could develop into a significant role down the road. **Grade: B**

DOUG HOLLEMAN

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	31	Woods, Rashaun	WR	6-2	202	Oklahoma State
2	14	Smiley, Justin	G	6-3	301	Alabama
2	26	Spencer, Shawntae	CB	6-0	176	Pittsburgh
3	14	Hamilton, Derrick	WR	6-3	203	Clemson
4	8	Sopoaga, Isaac	DT	6-2	321	Hawaii
4	31	Seigler, Richard	LB	6-2	238	Oregon State
6	23	Lee, Andy	P	6-0	206	Pittsburgh
6	33	Lewis, Keith	S	6-0	202	Oregon
7	16	Pickett, Cody	QB	6-3	227	Washington
7	25	Ferrara, Christian	DT	6-3	294	Syracuse

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Norman Hand, John Randle and Chad Eaton are no longer with the team, making defensive tackle the position of highest priority. Late in the first round, **Marcus Tubbs** was an outstanding fit and should be a solid force inside, pulling some of the attention away from Grant Wistrom and Chike Okeafor. **Michael Boulware** played linebacker in college, but will be making the transition to strong safety in Seattle. At 6-2, 225 pounds with sub-4.5 speed, he has all the tools needed to make the move successfully. **Sean Locklear** moved outside to left tackle as a senior at N.C. State and protected the back side of Philip Rivers. Purdue's **Niko Koutouvides** is a high-energy linebacker who will provide depth inside. Seventh-rounder **Donnie Jones** of LSU will likely replace Tom Rouen as the team's punter. **Grade: B**

Rd.	No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	School
1	23	Tubbs, Marcus	DT	6-3	324	Texas
2	21	Boulware, Michael	LB	6-2	225	Florida State
3	21	Locklear, Sean	G	6-3	301	North Carolina State
4	20	Koutouvides, Niko	LB	6-2	238	Purdue
5	25	Hackett, D.J.	WR	6-2	199	Colorado
6	24	Terrill, Craig	DT	6-2	294	Purdue
7	23	Jones, Donnie	P	6-2	222	LSU

RUSH HOUR

A FANTASY FOOTBALL REPORT

Make sure the fantasy book you're writing this season includes a dominant running back—or at least a couple of good ones.

BY STEVE SILVERMAN

Year in and year out, running backs are the key to fantasy football. Ten years ago, Emmitt Smith was the dominant player in the game. He led the Cowboys to three Super Bowl titles. In short order, Terrell Davis, Marshall Faulk, Jamal Lewis and Priest Holmes emerged as dominant backs, becoming the kind of runners who can carry any team into the playoffs and perhaps the Super Bowl.

Everyone is always looking for that next stud running back, and the Denver Broncos found one in Clinton Portis when they drafted him out of the University of Miami two years ago. Seemingly, Mike Shanahan hit the mother lode once again. First it was Davis, then Olandis Gary came along, with Mike Anderson following shortly thereafter. Some teams go years and years without a competent running game—look at the Bears since the retirement of Neal Anderson—but the Broncos pick up quality rushers the way you go to the driveway to pick up the morning newspaper.

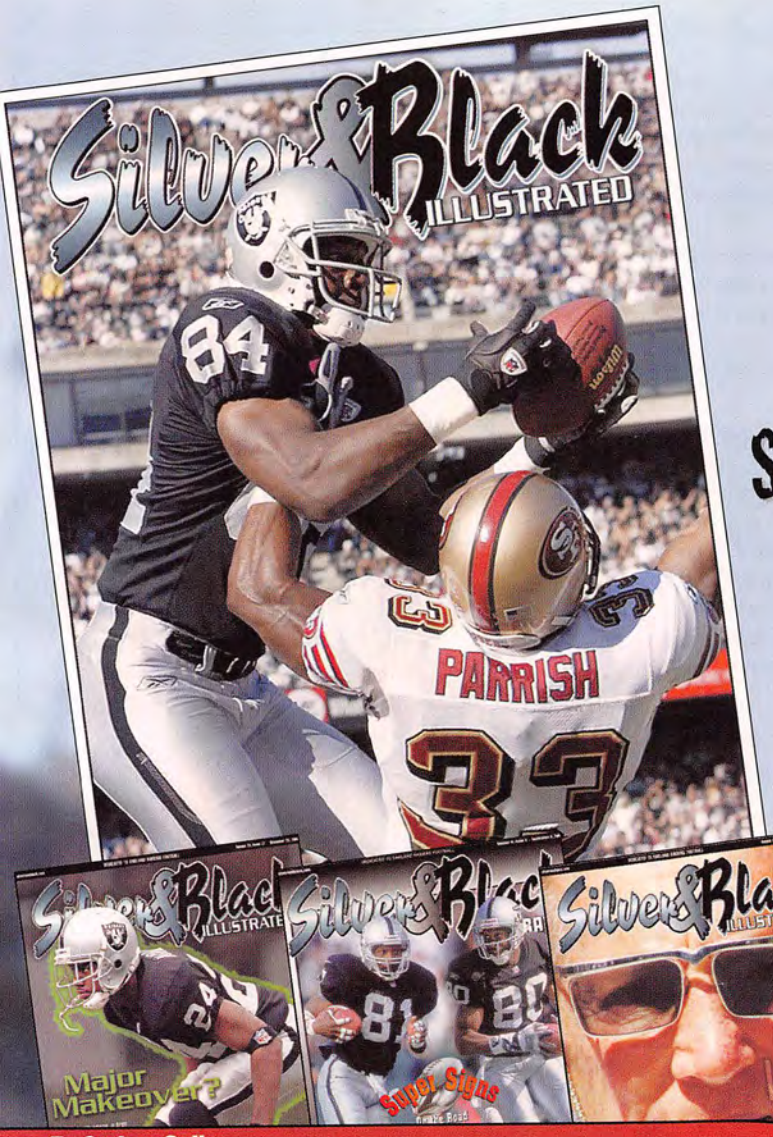
Portis may have been the most naturally gifted of them all. While he may have to battle the likes of Holmes, Lewis, Ahman Green and LaDainian Tomlinson for the title of the game's best back, Portis is clearly a dominant player. He ran for 1,591 yards and 14 touchdowns a year ago and has 3,099 yards in his first two seasons. He thought that kind of production earned him a big-money deal.

It did—but not with the Broncos. They traded him to Washington for cornerback Champ Bailey and Portis got his payday in D.C. It was a trade of epic proportions and one that should have huge ramifications in the NFL and fantasy football. First off, the Redskins get the dominant ground-gainer they have desperately needed. If any coach can build a balanced offense and get his quarterback to produce, it's Joe Gibbs. Critics talk about his 11-year absence from the game, but with a weapon like Portis at his disposal, the Washington offense will whir in high gear. Gibbs hopes Portis will do for the Redskin offense what Faulk did for St. Louis when he was acquired from the Colts in 1999.

Whither the Broncos? Denver drafted Quentin Griffin out of Oklahoma last year. Nothing overly explosive about his rookie performance—94 carries, 345 yards, no TDs—but Shanahan knows running backs. If he didn't think he could come up with a quality running game, he wouldn't have parted with Portis.

Finding quality running backs is the key to succeeding at fantasy football. Often they are obvious choices, but every once in a while a sharp owner can find one by following a coach's thought process and making an educated guess.

But while you can't win in fantasy without a great back—or at least a pair of good ones—overlooking quarterbacks and receivers is a sin as well. Owners will try to stock great backs early in their draft, and that's a great plan of attack. But don't chase an average-to-good running back at the expense of a great quarterback or receiver. If Tomlinson, Portis and Green are gone while Peyton Manning and Torry Holt remain on the board, the smart fantasy player will make the right move. He won't just go by the book. Sometimes he'll write his own.



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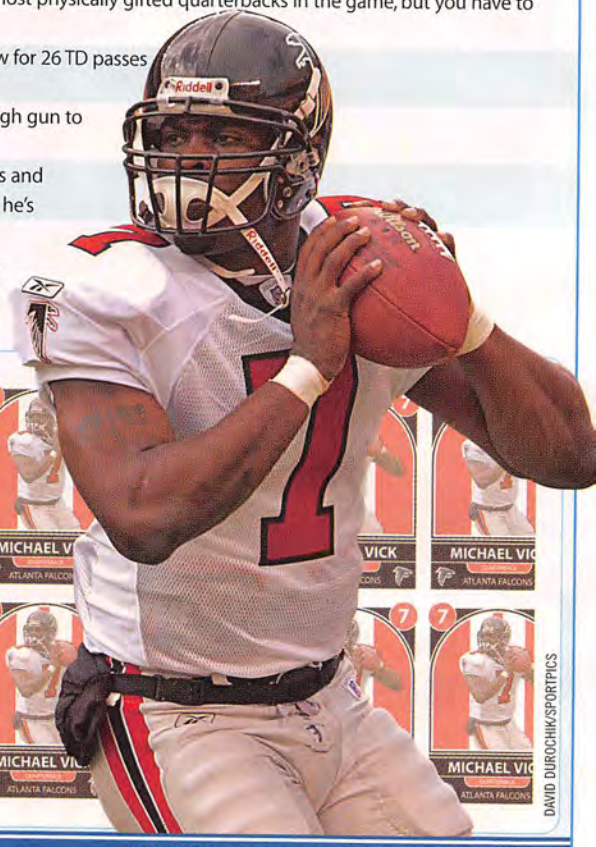
Quarterbacks

*FA = Free Agent at press time

1	Michael Vick	ATL	OK, last season was a washout. A broken leg will do that to you. However, Vick could be a TD machine if he can stay in the lineup for 16 games.
2	Peyton Manning	IND	His tremendous postseason run only complemented the 29/10 TD/interception ratio he put on the board in 2003. Manning has a slew of weapons and takes advantage of all of them.
3	Donovan McNabb	PHI	Relief has come in the form of Terrell Owens. Toughness and intelligence are strong points, but he had had just 16 TD passes last year.
4	Trent Green	KC	Priest Holmes would make any quarterback better and Green happens to be the beneficiary. Green makes solid decisions and was at his best in the second quarter with 10 TD tosses and just two interceptions.
5	Steve McNair	TEN	Peaking as he heads into his 10th season. He has thrown 67 TD passes the last three years and has completed better than 60 percent the last four seasons.
6	Daunte Culpepper	MIN	Stop us if you have heard this before: One of the three most physically gifted quarterbacks in the game, but you have to question his decision-making.
7	Matt Hasselbeck	SEA	Turned potential into production last year when he threw for 26 TD passes and 3,841 yards.
8	Brett Favre	GB	Slipped a bit in 2003, but Favre still had more than enough gun to throw for 32 TDs and 3,361 yards.
9	Chad Pennington	NYJ	Injuries robbed him of a stellar year, but Pennington sees and understands the game as well as anyone and that's why he's so dangerous.
10	Aaron Brooks	NO	For a guy with his athletic ability, it's somewhat shocking that Brooks has never had more than two rushing TDs in a season.

11	Tom Brady	NE	26	Tommy Maddox	PIT
12	Jeff Garcia	CLE	27	Quincy Carter	DAL
13	Marc Bulger	STL	28	Kyle Boller	BAL
14	Rich Gannon	OAK	29	Rex Grossman	CHI
15	Jake Plummer	DEN	30	Mark Brunell	WAS
16	Jake Delhomme	CAR	31	Brad Johnson	TB
17	Drew Bledsoe	BUF	32	Philip Rivers	SD
18	Byron Leftwich	JAX	33	A.J. Feeley	MIA
19	David Carr	HOU	34	Jon Kitna	CIN
20	Carson Palmer	CIN	35	Drew Brees	SD
21	Joey Harrington	DET	36	Patrick Ramsey	WAS
22	Eli Manning	NYG	37	Tim Couch	CLE
23	Josh McCown	ARI	38	Jay Fiedler	MIA
24	Ben Roethlisberger	PIT	39	Billy Volek	TEN
25	Kurt Warner	FA	40	Kelly Holcomb	CLE



DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

MICHAEL VICK

Breakout Players

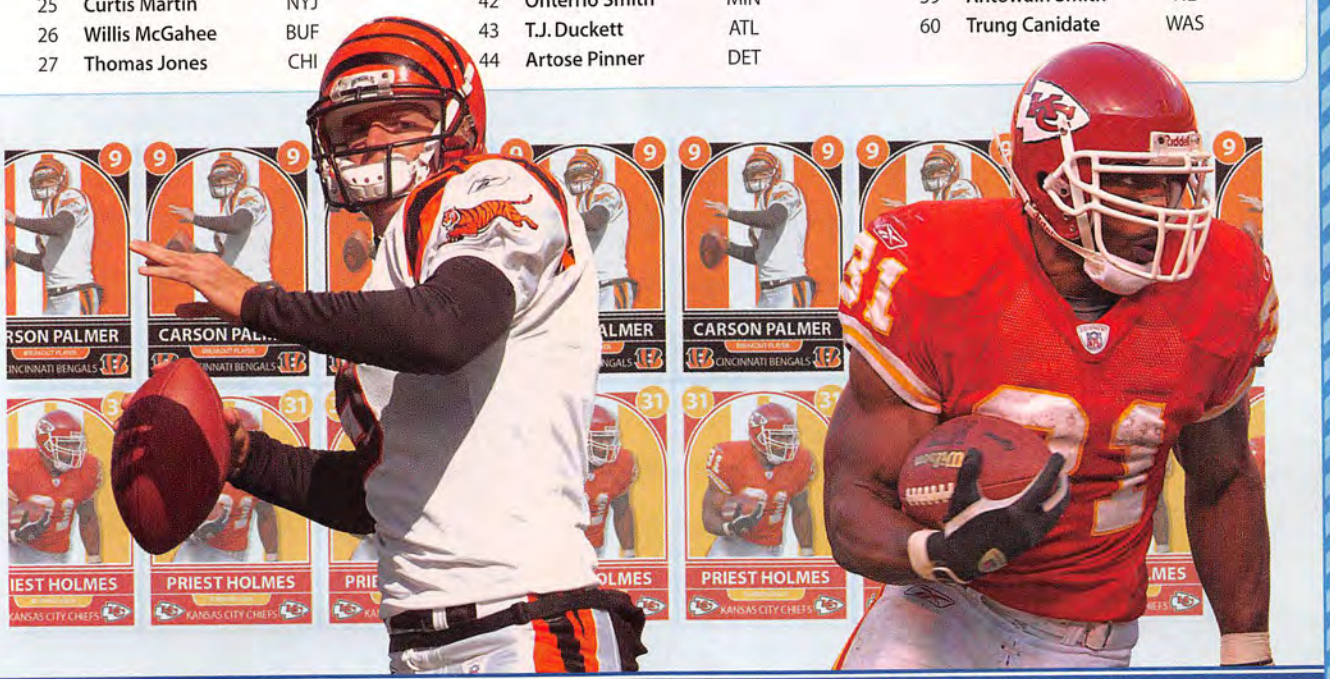
1	Carson Palmer	CIN	The former USC Heisman Trophy winner has the mental makeup to endure a few difficult moments early in the season, and he has the weapons to put big numbers on the board.
2	Domanick Davis	HOU	After running for 1,031 yards and eight TDs a year ago, Davis is ready to become a star. He has excellent patience as a runner, which allows him to set up his blockers.
3	Quentin Griffin	DEN	It's always running-back roulette in Denver, and now it's Griffin's turn to become the star. With Clinton Portis off to Washington, coach Mike Shanahan plugs in Griffin and finds his next big-play back.
4	Willis McGahee	BUF	He still has to show that he is healthy and prove he is better than Travis Henry. While it may not happen early, McGahee will become a major star before the season hits the midway point.
5	Anquan Boldin	ARI	Boldin served notice as a rookie that he will be a major force. He had 101 catches for 1,377 yards and eight TDs as a rookie.
6	Javon Walker	GB	The word on Walker prior to the start of last season was that he did not work hard enough and had a difficult time understanding his responsibilities. However, he gained stature every week and ended up with nine TD receptions.
7	Charles Rogers	DET	He had almost as much hype coming in last year as Larry Fitzgerald does this year. Few folks are talking about Rogers this year, however, as he was slowed by injuries during that rookie season.
8	Josh Reed	BUF	After the Bills traded Peerless Price to Atlanta, they expected Reed to step up and become a star. He didn't, turning in an average season with 58 catches for 588 yards and only two TDs.
9	David Givens	NE	The New England offense is clearly a No-Star Zone—with the exception of QB Tom Brady—but Givens has the speed to alter that perception. He runs extremely well and Brady likes throwing to him.
10	Dallas Clark	IND	He runs well and he's difficult to bring down once he gets under way. Clark is extremely intelligent and understands all the nuances of the Indianapolis offense.

RunningBacks

1	Priest Holmes	KC	Let's start with the basics: He's been in the end zone 51 times (48 on the ground) during the last two seasons. Holmes is an especially fast starter who scored seven times in the first three games last season.
2	LaDainian Tomlinson	SD	Tomlinson doesn't have to take a backseat to anyone in terms of toughness or running ability. If he was on a team with a solid offensive line and a decent passing game he might be able to challenge Holmes for productivity.
3	Ahman Green	GB	Ah, maturity. The Packers have a running back at the peak of his game who takes his responsibilities very seriously. That was not the case earlier in his career. As he enters his seventh season, Green is coming off a year in which he ran for 1,883 yards, had 15 touchdowns and 15 runs of 20 or more yards.
4	Deuce McAllister	NO	Powerful and fast, McAllister is a true punisher. He'll run over defenders who try to arm tackle him and run past anyone who doesn't get in front of him.
5	Clinton Portis	WAS	Now that he has gotten his much-needed cash in Washington, will his desire be affected? Insiders say that he wanted a big payday more than anything else and may be somewhat satisfied.
6	Shaun Alexander	SEA	It's hard to find fault with Alexander, especially from a fantasy perspective. He has put 30 rushing TDs on the board in the last two seasons and seems to play harder when he believes he has a chance to put the ball in the end zone.
7	Edgerrin James	IND	James ran for 1,259 yards and 11 touchdowns last year, but he was never at his best until the postseason. He finally seems fully recovered from his brutal 2001 knee injury and subsequent surgery.
8	Marshall Faulk	STL	He's as smart and opportunistic as any player in the game. Faulk, however, may not be the human dynamo he was earlier in his career.
9	Jamal Lewis	BAL	And how was your offseason, Mr. Lewis? Despite his arrest for drug-related charges, Lewis remains the linchpin of the Baltimore offense. Coach Brian Billick realizes that Lewis may have some "eligibility" problems, but he should be able to dominate again this year.
10	Ricky Williams	MIA	The 2002 season stands alone as Williams' signature year. After running for 1,853 yards and 16 touchdowns, Williams was down to 1,372 yards and nine TDs last season. Even more troubling than the drop-off in yards and TDs was the dip in yards per carry, from 4.8 to 3.5.

11	Kevan Barlow	SF	28	Lee Suggs	CLE	45	Chris Perry	CIN
12	Kevin Jones	DET	29	Michael Bennett	MIN	46	Jerome Bettis	PIT
13	Fred Taylor	JAX	30	Eddie George	TEN	47	DeShaun Foster	CAR
14	Stephen Davis	CAR	31	Justin Fargas	OAK	48	Tyrone Wheatley	OAK
15	Corey Dillon	NE	32	Travis Henry	BUF	49	James Stewart	FA
16	Domanick Davis	HOU	33	Brian Westbrook	PHI	50	Kevin Faulk	NE
17	Quentin Griffin	DEN	34	Julius Jones	DAL	51	Michael Pittman	TB
18	Tiki Barber	NYG	35	Anthony Thomas	CHI	52	Troy Hambrick	DAL
19	Charlie Garner	TB	36	Chris Brown	TEN	53	Moe Williams	MIN
20	Mike Anderson	DEN	37	Warrick Dunn	ATL	54	Mike Cloud	NE
21	Marcel Shipp	ARI	38	Garrison Hearst	DEN	55	Correll Buckhalter	PHI
22	Duce Staley	PIT	39	Steven Jackson	STL	56	LaMont Jordan	NYJ
23	Rudi Johnson	CIN	40	William Green	CLE	57	Greg Jones	JAX
24	Tatum Bell	DEN	41	Mike Alstott	TB	58	Lamar Gordon	STL
25	Curtis Martin	NYJ	42	Onterrio Smith	MIN	59	Antowain Smith	NE
26	Willis McGahee	BUF	43	T.J. Duckett	ATL	60	Trung Canidate	WAS
27	Thomas Jones	CHI	44	Artose Pinner	DET			

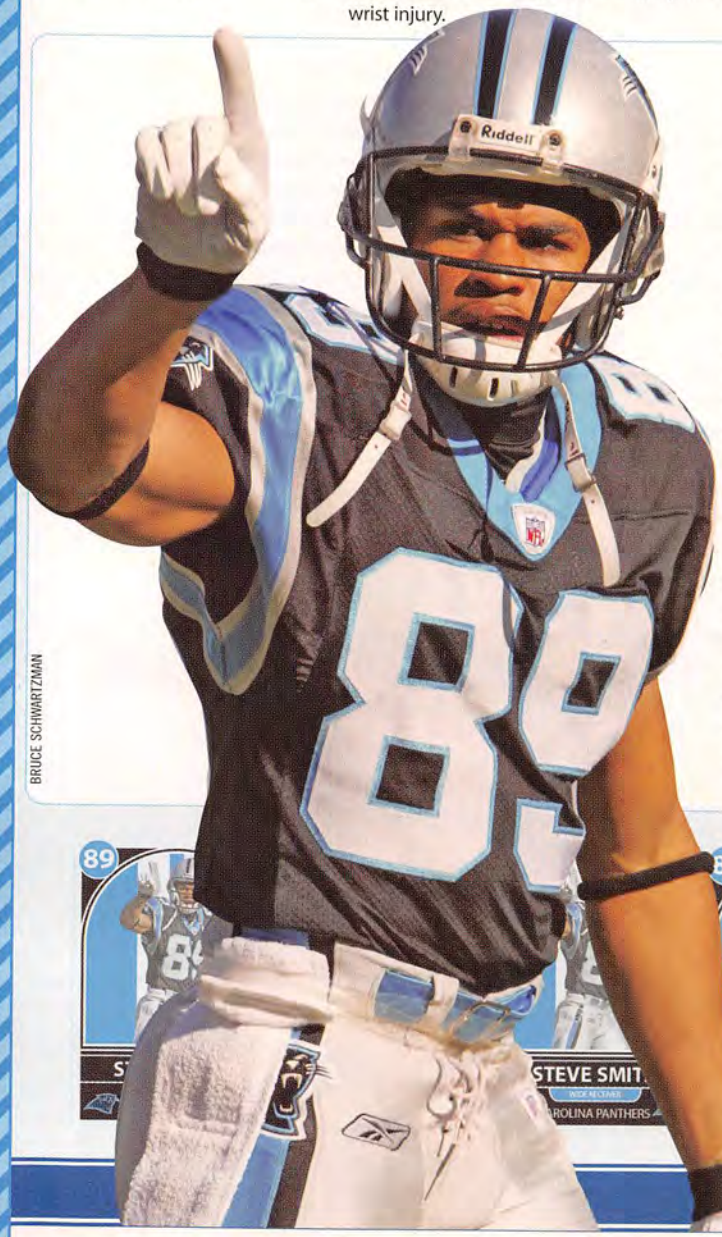
TOMASSO DEROSA; DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS



CARSON PALMER **PRIEST HOLMES**

Wide Receivers

1	Randy Moss	MIN	While he'll never win any awards for good citizenship, Moss is all about the big plays. Last year he had 17 TD catches and 33 receptions of 20 yards or more.
2	Marvin Harrison	IND	Possibly the smartest receiver in the game in generations. Harrison understands and can read defensive backs as well as anyone, which is why he breaks wide open so often. Harrison had 10 TD receptions and 21 plays for 20 or more yards in '03.
3	Torry Holt	STL	Moved to the top of the class among wideouts last year after his 117 catches for 1,696 yards and 12 TDs. His year was even more impressive because neither Marshall Faulk nor Marc Bulger was dominant. Holt can get open and make the difficult catch.
4	Hines Ward	PIT	Talk about the quintessential self-made player. Ward is a glue-fingered receiver who is just as eager to deliver a shot as he is to catch the ball.
5	Joe Horn	NO	The NFL's resident egomaniac doesn't get used enough by Saint coach Jim Haslett. Horn caught 78 passes for 973 yards and 10 TDs last year, but New Orleans needs to use him more in the red zone.
6	Terrell Owens	PHI	Some think the presence of Owens automatically means that the Eagles are going to the Super Bowl. Owens is a remarkable physical specimen who can shake defenders off once he gets into the open field.
7	Chad Johnson	CIN	Why did the Bengals rise from the ranks of NFL dregs last season? In large part, they had Johnson's remarkable 92-catch, 1,355-yard season that included 10 touchdowns. Johnson appears to be an athletic trash-talker of the first rank, but the truth is that he works harder in practice than any other player on the team.
8	Steve Smith	CAR	Smith truly came into his own in the postseason when he beat the Rams with an overtime TD and tormented the Patriots in the Super Bowl. It wasn't just a matter of him getting hot—Smith caught 88 balls for 1,110 yards and seven TDs during the regular season.
9	Laveranues Coles	WAS	One of the hardest-working players in the league. He tried to lift the Redskins last year, but the combination of Steve Spurrier and Patrick Ramsey was too much to overcome.
10	Santana Moss	NYJ	He was all set to take off for a brilliant year in 2003, but those plans were put on hold to a degree by Chad Pennington's wrist injury.



BRUCE SCHWARTZMAN

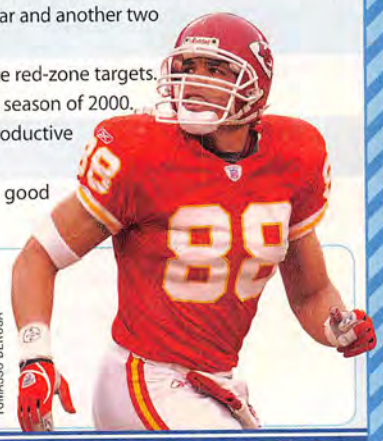
11	Eric Moulds	BUF	36	Donté Stallworth	NO
12	Plaxico Burress	PIT	37	Ashley Lelie	DEN
13	Charles Rogers	DET	38	Justin McCareins	NYJ
14	Larry Fitzgerald	ARI	39	Troy Brown	NE
15	Derrick Mason	TEN	40	Deion Branch	NE
16	Darrell Jackson	SEA	41	David Boston	MIA
17	Keyshawn Johnson	DAL	42	Reggie Wayne	IND
18	Amani Toomer	NYG	43	Michael Jenkins	ATL
19	Anquan Boldin	ARI	44	Brandon Lloyd	SF
20	Roy Williams	DET	45	Quincy Morgan	CLE
21	Koren Robinson	SEA	46	David Givens	NE
22	Javon Walker	GB	47	André Davis	CLE
23	Rod Smith	DEN	48	Devery Henderson	NO
24	Andre Johnson	HOU	49	Jerry Rice	OAK
25	Rod Gardner	WAS	50	Joey Galloway	TB
26	Jerry Porter	OAK	51	Tai Streets	DET
27	Donald Driver	GB	52	Kevin Dyson	SD
28	Peerless Price	ATL	53	Muhsin Muhammad	CAR
29	Lee Evans	BUF	54	Eddie Kennison	KC
30	Jimmy Smith	JAX	55	Terry Glenn	DAL
31	Chris Chambers	MIA	56	Rashaun Woods	SF
32	Isaac Bruce	STL	57	Drew Bennett	TEN
33	Keenan McCardell	TB	58	Antonio Bryant	DAL
34	Marty Booker	CHI	59	Devard Darling	BAL
35	Peter Warrick	CIN	60	Brandon Stokley	IND

STEVE SMITH

Tight Ends

1	Tony Gonzalez	KC	While many fantasy experts have tried to give his top spot away to Jeremy Shockey and Todd Heap the last couple of seasons, Gonzalez remains the best tight end in the business. He's powerful when he needs to be and can use his athleticism to create big plays. His 71-catch, 916-yard, 10-touchdown season in 2003 shows he can still be a dominant force.
2	Jeremy Shockey	NYG	Injuries kept Shockey from being all he could be in 2003. Strong as a Brahma Bull, Shockey often has a hard time keeping his emotions in check and will take some unnecessary penalties. However, he knows how to play in tight quarters and will make big plays at key moments.
3	Todd Heap	BAL	After putting six touchdowns on the board in 2002, the number fell to three in 2003. However, the Ravens had QB difficulties and Heap served notice in the AFC wild-card game against Tennessee that he is a major force by catching the game-tying TD late in the fourth quarter.
4	Shannon Sharpe	DEN	The biggest mouth in the league is one of the game's ancient warriors. He keeps himself in tremendous physical condition and caught 62 passes for 770 yards and eight touchdowns last year. Those kinds of numbers are eye-catching considering his age and position.
5	Kellen Winslow	CLE	WInslow appears to be the perfect target for new Cleveland QB Jeff Garcia since he gets off the line well and explodes into the secondary. A season with 8-10 TD catches seems within his reach.
6	Randy McMichael	MIA	A wide receiver with a tight end's uniform number, McMichael has a shot at climbing the ladder this year. With his size, strength and athleticism (6-3, 247 pounds), he is nearly impossible to stop when he gets a full head of steam going.
7	Alge Crumpler	ATL	Despite his massive size (6-3, 262), Crumpler has always dropped hints that he can go downfield and make plays consistently. Crumpler had eight receptions of 20 or more yards last year and another two of 40 or more.
8	Bubba Franks	GB	Throughout his first four years, Franks has proven to be one of Brett Favre's favorite red-zone targets. He has 20 TD receptions the last three years and has not fumbled since his rookie season of 2000.
9	Itula Mili	SEA	Still relatively unknown, Mili is quietly on his way to becoming one of the most productive tight ends in the game.
10	Daniel Graham	NE	On a team with few offensive stars, Graham has a chance to become one. He is good in the red zone and can also get downfield.

11	Jim Kleinsasser	MIN	16	Boo Williams	NO
12	Dallas Clark	IND	17	Marcus Pollard	IND
13	Freddie Jones	ARI	18	L.J. Smith	PHI
14	Ben Watson	NE	19	Erron Kinney	TEN
15	Billy Miller	HOU	20	Eric Johnson	SF


TOMASSO DEROSA

TONY GONZALEZ

Kickers

1	Mike Vanderjagt	IND	You can't get much better than perfect, and that's exactly what Vanderjagt was last year when he made all 37 of his FG attempts. While he only had one attempt of 50 yards or more, he was 12-for-12 on attempts between 40 and 49 yards.
2	David Akers	PHI	Akers slipped a bit last year as he made 24 of 29 FG attempts. However, if there's any kicker who could match Vanderjagt and put a perfect season on the board, it's Akers.
3	Jeff Wilkins	STL	In addition to playing for one of the most prolific offenses in the game, Wilkins is one of the most consistent kickers in the league. He put 163 points on the board and made a monstrous 39 of 42 FG attempts, including all four from 50 yards or more.
4	Matt Stover	BAL	Very tough and very consistent, Stover is going into his 15th season and Ravens coach Brian Billick knows he can count on him in the clutch.
5	Ryan Longwell	GB	He is meticulous about his approach and consistency. Longwell connected on 23 of 26 FG attempts last season and put 120 points on the board.
6	Jason Elam	DEN	One of the league's legendary booters for the last 10 years, he no doubt benefits from playing at mile-high altitude. Elam connected on 27 of 31 FG attempts last year, making eight of nine in the fourth quarter.
7	Josh Brown	SEA	While he is a notch below the kickers who rank higher, Brown gets a ton of opportunities because the Seahawks move the ball well but don't always get into the end zone. Brown made 22 of 30 attempts last season and put 114 points on the board.
8	Adam Vinatieri	NE	While he doesn't score like Vanderjagt or Wilkins, is there any other kicker you would want out there when the game is on the line? He has made the winning kick in two of the last three Super Bowls and his ability in the clutch means he will always have a job as long as Bill Belichick remains with the Pats.
9	John Kasay	CAR	The Panthers became an explosive team last year and much of their offensive thrust came from Kasay, who made 32 of 38 FG attempts.
10	Jay Feely	ATL	He made just 19 of 27 attempts. However, the return of Michael Vick and just a slight improvement could make Feely one of the most valuable kickers in fantasy football.

11	Olindo Mare	MIA	15	John Carney	NO	19	Martin Gramatica	TB
12	Sebastian Janikowski	OAK	16	Morten Andersen	KC	20	Jason Hanson	DET
13	Paul Edinger	CHI	17	Shayne Graham	CIN			
14	Joe Nedney	TEN	18	John Hall	WAS			

Defenses

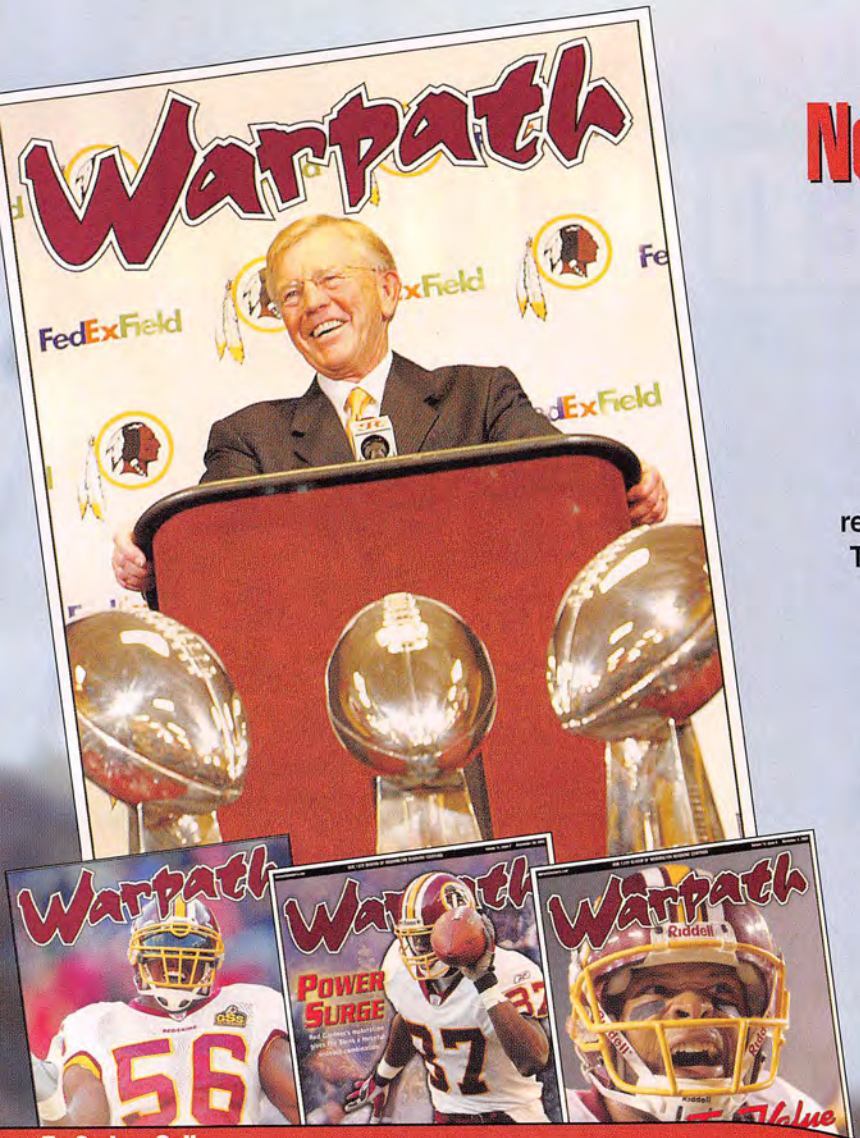
1	**Baltimore Ravens**	Ray Lewis is still the most intimidating player on the field, but from a fantasy perspective it's Ed Reed who gets it done. Reed tied for the AFC lead with seven interceptions and returned one for a score.
2	**Tampa Bay Buccaneers**	A much different look for a team that has depended on the veteran leadership of Warren Sapp and John Lynch for years. Both have moved on, but DE Simeon Rice and LB Derrick Brooks return.
3	**New England Patriots**	The sum of the whole is far greater than the individual parts. While Ty Law was complaining about being "lied to" by Bill Belichick, look for all parties to come together before the start of the season.
4	**Miami Dolphins**	Based on pure talent, the Dolphins may be the best defensive team in the league.
5	**Carolina Panthers**	No team gets more from their front four than the Panthers. Defensive end Mike Rucker had a monstrous year with 12 sacks and DT Kris Jenkins may be the strongest player in the league. If Julius Peppers (7 sacks) returns to form and has a great year, the Panthers will punish opponents.
6	**St. Louis Rams**	The Rams suffered a couple of major losses in the offseason. Defensive Coordinator Lovie Smith went to Chicago to lead the Bears, while DE Grant Wistrom signed with Seattle.
7	**Dallas Cowboys**	Year Two of the Bill Parcells regime promises to be very exciting in Dallas. While the main moves have been on the offensive side of the ball, speed is the name of the game on defense. Greg Ellis had eight sacks a year a go and Terence Newman promises to be an awesome weapon in the secondary. However, safety Roy Williams sets the tone with his ability to intimidate.
8	**Kansas City Chiefs**	Dick Vermeil's team has plenty of defensive liabilities as evidenced by its postseason loss to the Colts, but the Chiefs were plus-19 in the takeaway/turnover department, which led the league.
9	**Tennessee Titans**	The loss of Jevon Kearse looks fatal, but The Freak was more flash than substance as a result of frequent injuries. This team gives up a lot through the air—30th in passing yards per game allowed—but knows how to make big plays.
10	**Philadelphia Eagles**	Few teams have gone through more defensive changes than the Eagles, who have brought in DE Jevon Kearse and LB Dhani Jones while losing CBs Bobby Taylor and Troy Vincent and DE Marco Coleman. One thing remains the same: the presence of awesome defensive coordinator Jim Johnson.

11	**Seattle Seahawks**	19	**Washington Redskins**	27	**Cleveland Browns**
12	**Green Bay Packers**	20	**Pittsburgh Steelers**	28	**Jacksonville Jaguars**
13	**Minnesota Vikings**	21	**New York Giants**	29	**New York Jets**
14	**Buffalo Bills**	22	**Cincinnati Bengals**	30	**Houston Texans**
15	**Indianapolis Colts**	23	**Chicago Bears**	31	**Arizona Cardinals**
16	**San Francisco 49ers**	24	**Detroit Lions**	32	**San Diego Chargers**
17	**Atlanta Falcons**	25	**Oakland Raiders**		
18	**Denver Broncos**	26	**New Orleans Saints**		

Rookies to Watch

1	**Kevin Jones**, RB	DET	The Lions have needed an explosive back since the retirement of Barry Sanders and Jones has the speed, quickness and change-of-direction ability to do just that.
2	**Larry Fitzgerald**, WR	ARI	Extremely mature and well-coordinated athlete who has the best hands of any rookie receiver in recent memory. Fitzgerald caught 92 passes for 1,672 yards with 22 TDs last year at Pittsburgh. If Arizona QB Josh McCown is not a fraud, the combination of Fitzgerald and Anquan Boldin should be exciting.
3	**Kellen Winslow**, TE	CLE	Winslow has great hands and excels at making big plays after the catch. Cleveland QB Jeff Garcia loves throwing to the tight end, so this could be a sensational match.
4	**Tatum Bell**, RB	DEN	Mike Shanahan works wonders with running backs and Bell brings the kind of game-breaking speed needed to become a star. Bell will have to show he is better than Quentin Griffin and Garrison Hearst and, once he does, could become the next in the series of great Bronco running backs.
5	**Roy Williams**, WR	DET	The Lions picked up the best wideout in the draft last year in Charles Rogers and may have done the same thing this year with Williams. He has all the measurables—size, strength, speed and great hands. Compares with Randy Moss.
6	**Julius Jones**, RB	DAL	The Cowboys can be questioned for their decision-making because they had a chance to select Oregon State's Steven Jackson in the first round and decided to pass. Jones has plenty of speed and should emerge as the Cowboys' top running back this season.
7	**Lee Evans**, WR	BUF	One of the toughest players coming out of college. After tearing up his knee in 2002, Evans regained all of his speed and averaged 19.4 yards per catch last season. He should quickly become one of Drew Bledsoe's favorite targets.
8	**Ben Roethlisberger**, QB	PIT	The Steelers know that Tommy Maddox is not the answer. Roethlisberger is extremely motivated and should be in the starting lineup early in the season. He will find that Hines Ward and Plaxico Burress make sensational targets.
9	**Michael Jenkins**, WR	ATL	His athleticism will allow him to stand out. Michael Vick needs a young, fearless receiver who can go up and get it and come down on balance and make big plays. That's exactly the kind of talent Jenkins brings to the table.
10	**Devery Henderson**, WR	NO	While Joe Horn is still the No. 1 receiver with the Saints, Henderson will soon be right behind. He has explosive speed and is fearless going over the middle.

11	**Rashaun Woods**, WR	SF	16	**Ben Watson**, TE	NE	21	**Bernard Berrian**, WR	CHI
12	**Steven Jackson**, RB	STL	17	**Ben Troupe**, TE	TEN	22	**Darius Watts**, WR	DEN
13	**Eli Manning**, QB	NYG	18	**Devard Darling**, WR	BAL	23	**Jerricho Cotchery**, WR	NYJ
14	**Chris Perry**, RB	CIN	19	**Philip Rivers**, QB	SD	24	**P.K. Sam**, WR	NE
15	**Greg Jones**, RB	JAX	20	**Reggie Williams**, WR	JAX	25	**J.P. Losman**, QB	BUF



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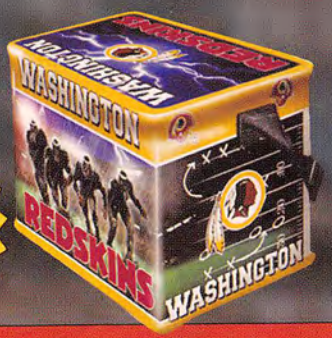

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AFC WILD CARD	AFC DIVISIONAL PLAYOFF	AFC CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP	NFC CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP	NFC DIVISIONAL PLAYOFF	NFC WILD CARD
BALTIMORE	KANSAS CITY	INDIANAPOLIS	ATLANTA	SEATTLE	CAROLINA
KANSAS CITY	INDIANAPOLIS			ATLANTA	SEATTLE
DENVER	NEW ENGLAND	NEW ENGLAND	PHILADELPHIA	PHILADELPHIA	MINNESOTA
CINCINNATI	DENVER			WASHINGTON	WASHINGTON

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS over **PHILADELPHIA EAGLES**

SUPER BOWL XXXIX
JACKSONVILLE, FL.

TOMASSO DEROSA

Terry, You're colorful. Jimmy, you're laser sharp. Howie, you have unique angles.
Chris, you think around corners. Dan, you get back to basics. But, guys, WHO BEATS THE SPREAD?

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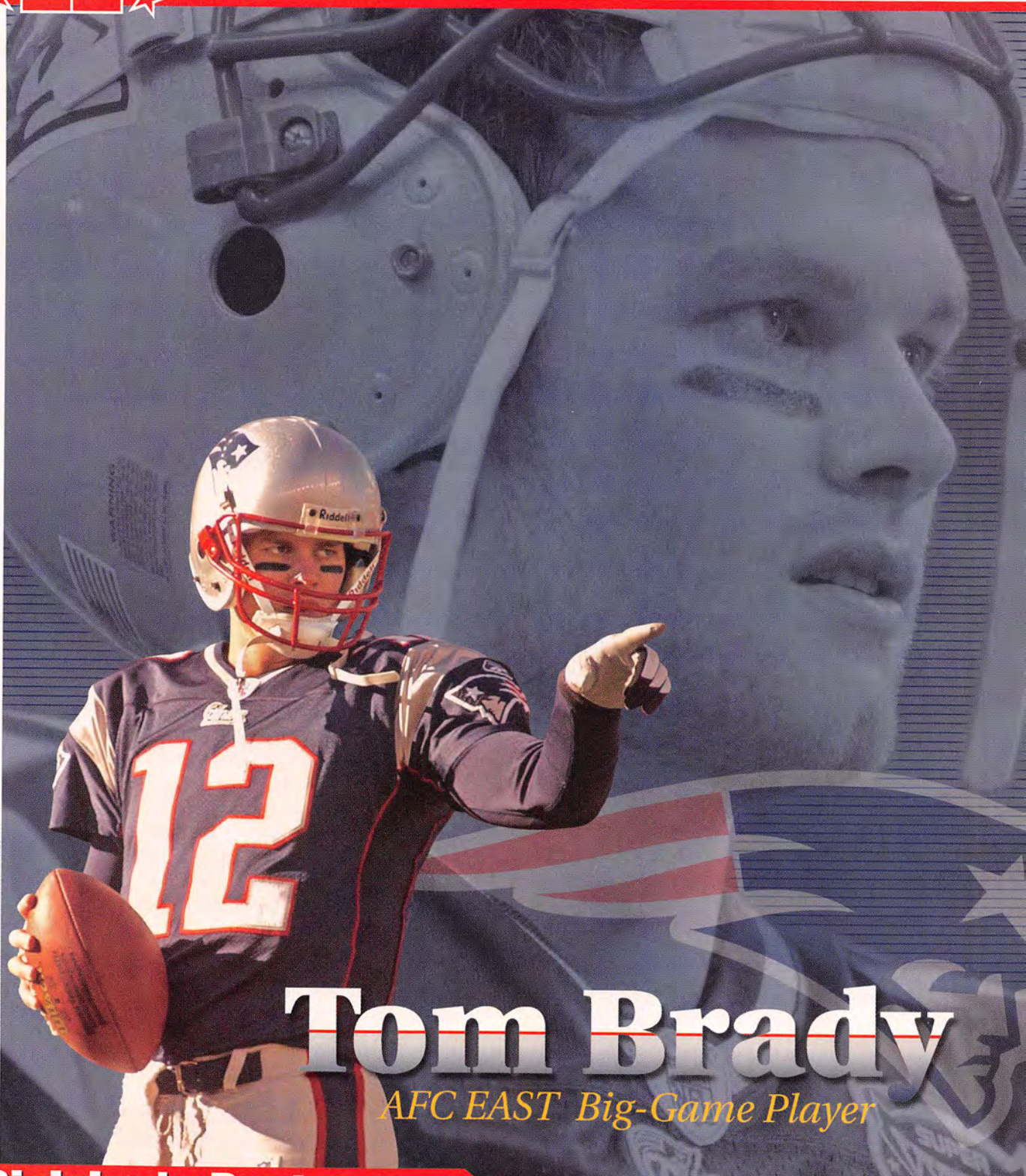

KEITH NORDSTROM/AI WIRE; BACKGROUND: BRIAN BAHR/GETTY IMAGES

Tom Brady

AFC EAST Big-Game Player

Division's Best

BIG-GAME PLAYER	RUSHER	RECEIVER	TACKLER	SPECIAL-TEAMS WARRIOR
Tom Brady, QB New England	**Curtis Martin, RB New York Jets**	**Chris Chambers, WR Miami**	**Rodney Harrison, S New England**	**Larry Izzo, LB New England**
How can it not be? Threw one interception in the postseason en route to his second Super Bowl MVP.	It's a tough call with Ricky Williams, but Martin has rushed for 1,000 yards nine consecutive seasons.	On the brink of real stardom —provided the Dolphins figure out who will be trying to get him the ball.	He's the best if you call his impersonation of a heat-seeking missile a tackle. He blows people up.	The Patriots no longer relegate him solely to these duties that have kept him in the league this long.

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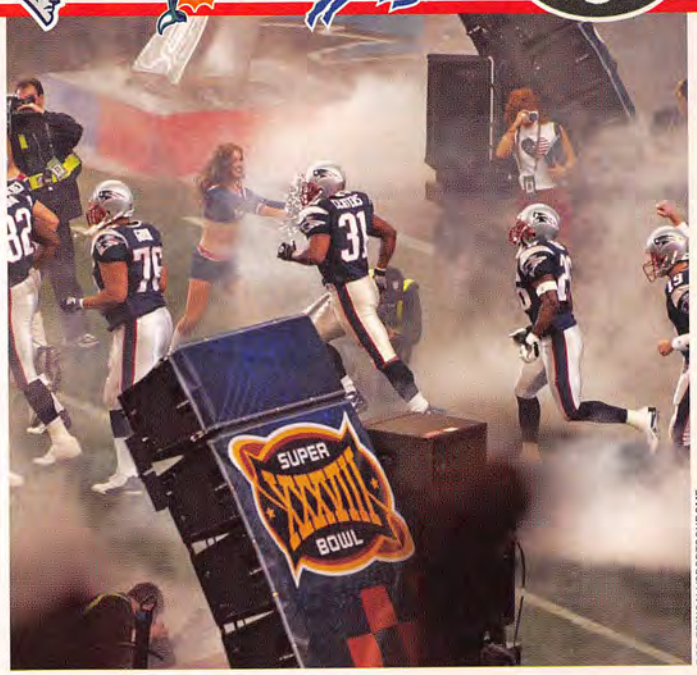

ROB TRINGALI/SPORTSCHROME

The New England Patriots take the field for Super Bowl XXXVIII.

New England's professional approach will again make every day Patriots' Day

By Larry Weisman, USA Today

Maybe the New England Patriots play as if their hair is on fire, but they handle the offseason and future planning with otherworldly cool.

As their competitors in the AFC East underwent major overhauls, the defending Super Bowl champions opted for a tweak here and there in preparation for a shot at a third title in four years and a little slice of greatness. Oh, they shed 400 pounds of Ted Washington but regained 340 in Keith Traylor. They signed a punter and absorbed a few nasty complaints from cornerback Ty Law, one of America's unhappiest rich guys. Given what went on around the division, this was Tranquility Base.

The Miami Dolphins jettisoned four of their five starting offensive linemen, most of Ricky Williams' hair and acquired a starting quarterback with almost no history of starting. Owner Wayne Huizenga, who rarely speaks to the media, put the staff on notice that he expected to be in the playoffs, likened A.J. Feeley to Dan Marino (surely a first for Feeley—and Marino) and blamed last year's failure to reach the postseason on the kicker. Not a bad day's work.

The New York Jets took a blade to an aging, plodding defense and ditched two starting linebackers and half of the secondary after dumping defensive coordinator Ted Cottrell. There's a sense here as well that the owner, Woody Johnson, has exhausted his patience with either coach Herman Edwards or General Manager Terry Bradway. The Jets' victory total has dwindled from 10 to nine to six the last three seasons.

The Buffalo Bills fired coach Gregg Williams and kept most of the players who underachieved in what was supposed to be the "come-from-nowhere" run in 2003. Instead, the Bills went nowhere and reached into Pittsburgh for Steelers assistant Mike Mularkey, who promises to run an offense actually designed to gain yards and score points.

Not much separates these teams except maybe their approach. And that points to the Patriots finishing on top again.

1. NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS page 44

It's hard to pick against the Patriots when they return essentially the same lineup that went 17-2 and won 15 consecutive games, including two in the playoffs and the Super Bowl. They are the classic equation in which the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

2. MIAMI DOLPHINS page 48

The Dolphins won 10 games last year and became the first team since 1991 to do that and miss the playoffs. They need to find an inner reserve and a toughness that has eluded them consistently. Neither Feeley nor Jay Fiedler can cure what ails this team.

3. BUFFALO BILLS page 52

Buffalo's defense will carry it for a while. The Bills need to turn Drew Bledsoe back into a confident passer who gets rid of the ball quickly, but they may not have the offensive line they need. At least in the new offense, with assistants Tom Clements and Sam Wyche sketching the plays, they'll have a chance of playing to their strengths. Willis McGahee and Travis Henry could be an interesting backfield pairing if the Bills don't decide to trade Henry.

4. NEW YORK JETS page 56

The Jets have a tired look. There are holes in the offensive line, questions at linebacker. They'll go where Curtis Martin and Chad Pennington take them, but Martin is starting to slow down and Pennington, who came back too quickly from a broken wrist last season, needs to find his form again.

TEAMMATE	SENSE OF HUMOR	INTELLECT	SIDELINE STRATEGIST	FRONT-OFFICE EXECUTIVE
Coy Wire, S Buffalo	**Christian Fauria, TE New England**	**Kareem McKenzie, OT New York Jets**	**Romeo Crennel, defensive coordinator, New England**	**Scott Pioli, New England**
Took a back seat last year when the Bills acquired Lawyer Milloy, but never sulked and did his job.	Couches comments in wry, funny ways that media types can't help but appreciate.	The Jets right tackle earned his degree in three and a half years at Penn State.	Don't try scoring on the Patriots at home—just don't even try it.	New England's personnel man shops quietly for bargains in helping shape Bill Belichick's team.

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 1 2003 RECORD: 14-2

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Rodney Bailey, DE** (PIT)
- **Josh Miller, P** (PIT)
- **Keith Traylor, DT** (CHI)
- **Otis Smith, CB** (DET)
- **Jeff Burris, CB** (CIN)
- **Corey Dillon, RB** (trade, CIN)

STADIUM FACTS

Gillette Stadium

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Tickets: **800-543-1776**
Web site: **www.patriots.com**

Avg. Attendance **68,436**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **100.0**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$75.33**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$25.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.50 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.50 / 22oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Tom Brady was an 18th-round draft choice of the Montreal Expos as a catcher in the 1995 Major League Baseball Draft.

STAT: New England used 42 different starters during the 2003 regular season. Only the Raiders (48), Browns (43) and Texans (43) used more.

LOOK IT UP: Including preseason, regular-season and postseason games, the 2003 Patriots became just the second team in NFL history to post 21 wins in a single season (1976 Raiders).

THE COUNT:
1 – TDs allowed by the Pats in final six regular-season home games in 2003.
7-0 – Tom Brady's career record in overtime games.
96:42 – Minutes and seconds that the Patriots trailed during 15-game win streak.

Sum of Patriots' parts will continue to add up to one big, fat winner

The salary-cap era's success model shows no signs of slowing down

With two Super Bowl victories in three seasons, the Patriots should be the model franchise. But almost nobody followed that model of waiting until the initial run on free agents expired to pick up bargains. Except, of course, the Patriots. Their patience cost them some veteran players, including nose tackle Ted Washington and guard Damien Woody, but no team is more the sum of its parts than the Patriots. Well-coached, well-prepared and stocked with young players, New England's approach should allow it to always be a contender, if not a 17-2 champion. They don't lose at home and they never seem to attack the same way twice. It's difficult to picture teams repeating as Super Bowl winners in this era of free agency and the salary cap, but the Patriots seem to understand the best way to go about trying.

Offensive line — Grade: B

This is a solid group of overachievers. No big stars, no Pro Bowlers.

Center Dan Koppen might be a Pro Bowler one day, but he's going into just his second season. A former teammate of left guard Russ Hochstein's poked fun at him at the Super Bowl, but Hochstein played well and was re-signed before the free-agency period began. That former teammate, Warren Sapp, was unable to keep his own job.

If there's a problem here, it's a lack of depth. The Pats didn't address the O-line at all in the draft.

Quarterbacks — Grade: A-

Find a better big-game quarterback than Tom Brady if you can. He just keeps showing up and making plays. He was nearly flawless in the Super Bowl, though that late interception could have been a killer. Of course, it was the only one he threw in the postseason. Poised, polished and perfectly attuned to New England's style

Richard Seymour, DL

GLENN DANFORTH

of attack, he's the youngest quarterback to ever win two Super Bowls (and two Super Bowl MVP awards). He had offseason surgery on his throwing arm but should be fully ready for training camp.

Backup Rohan Davey played well in NFL Europe, for what that's worth.

Running backs

Grade: B

The Patriots have the equivalent of that old college dining hall special—mystery meat. Who knows what they get in Corey Dillon? He can be a 1,200-yard back or a constant moaner and complainer. Maybe a winning environment shuts the trap and re-energizes the legs. Dillon battled injuries and illness for most of last season, starting 11 of 13 games and rushing for 541 yards. He won't turn 30 until October, however, and is one of only four NFL players ever to rush for 1,000 or more yards in each of their first six seasons. The Patriots are expecting a big bounce back from Dillon.

Kevin Faulk, who lacks the size for every-down duty, remains a nice change-of-pace. He led the Patriots with 1,078 yards from scrimmage last year. Mike Cloud is a career spare part who seems to play well once a season. The X-factor here could be fourth-round pick Cedric Cobbs of Arkansas, who ended an up-and-down Razorback career in a big way with 1,320 yards rushing and 10 touchdowns in 2003.

Receivers

Grade: B

This is the area that typifies the Patriots' approach. There are lots of good players who perform well in their roles, but no star. Troy Brown may be approaching the downside of his career but Bethel Johnson has great speed and is only beginning to reveal his upside. They are complementary players.

Starters Deion Branch and David Givens and a collection of tight ends round out the group, though Daniel Graham needs to show better hands than he did in the postseason or rookie Ben Watson will chase him out of town. Fifth-round pick P.K. Sam of Florida State could surprise at wide receiver.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	314.9	17
Rushing	100.4	27
Passing	214.5	9
Scoring	348	12
Punt Returns	9.2	17
Kick Returns	23.8	4
Red Zone TD %	44.0	27
Total Defense	291.6	7
Against Rush	89.6	4
Against Pass	202.0	15
Points Allowed	238	1
Interceptions	29	1
Sacks	41	19
Turnover Diff.	+17	2

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
294	91	177	26

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
50	213	22	20

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
9	23	7	6

PATRIOTS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **TOM BRADY**
   Career Passing Yards: **10,233**
   Career TD Passes: **69**
2. **STEVE GROGAN**
   Career Passing Yards: **26,886**
   Career TD Passes: **182**
3. **DREW BLEDSOE**
   Career Passing Yards: **36,876**
   Career TD Passes: **201**

FINALSHOT/JRP

Defensive line

Grade: B+

Keith Traylor played alongside Washington in Chicago and now replaces him as the Patriots' designated run stopper. Perhaps only in comparison with Washington could the 340-pound Traylor be considered a bit undersized. Rookie Vince Wilfork, a mere 344, will also squeeze in here. The Pats may use more of a four-man front this year, which would put the versatile Dan Klecko at tackle.

Ty Warren should usurp Bobby Hamilton on the left side. Richard Seymour is as good as there is at right end. Second-round pick Marquise Hill of LSU has size (6-6, 300), strength and 25 games of starting experience in the SEC that could help him be a factor.

Linebackers

Grade: B+

Age is creeping up on this veteran group, with Roman Phifer (36) the oldest of the old. The Patriots play so many situational schemes that they are able to limit the snaps for the individuals and extend their lifespan. This is an active, able group. Willie McGinest and Rosevelt Colvin are timely pass rushers and Mike Vrabel can line up anywhere.

Patriots seek to profit from Super Bowl through DVD, not higher ticket prices

When the Patriots won their second Super Bowl in three years, they knew they had a unique opportunity—this was a chance to acknowledge their fans, please their corporate partners and generate a load of revenue—but one with which they had to be careful.

"The demand from the public and our partners is obviously high," says Patriots Vice Chairman Jonathan Kraft, "but we want to satisfy that demand without creating clutter that would diminish the value of everything."

To capitalize on their championship, the Patriots sent out "thank-you" letters to season-ticket holders announcing that prices would remain the same for the third year running. Kraft acknowledges that this doesn't seem like the team is taking advantage of an opportunity but says the team—the first to implement a paid waiting list—believes that building a relationship with fans is crucial.

"Sooner or later you'll have two or three sub-.500 seasons," Kraft says. "You want them to stay with you. We are building equity."

By comparison, the team New England beat in the Super Bowl, the Carolina Panthers, hiked their ticket prices a franchise-record $7 on the average seat, from $47 to $54.

The Patriots sought to leverage their Super Bowl success by releasing a sequel to "Three Games to Glory," the video they produced with NFL Films after their last Super Bowl title. "But we're doing this one in a much bigger way," Kraft says.

The DVD will again feature every down from the three playoff games, produced in the distinctive NFL Films style, featuring the voices of the team's radio announcers. But this time there will be special features allowing viewers to listen to running commentary by wide receivers Deion Branch and David Givens or to stop the game action and listen to coach Bill Belichick break down five critical plays in each game. There will also be a second DVD with 45 minutes of behind-the-scenes footage of the championship run from hotels, planes and meeting rooms, a special montage of moments from the regular season, footage of the welcome-back parade and an NFL Films feature on the playoffs.

The Patriots then cut several corporate partners in on the action, with deals like the one that makes pharmacy chain CVS the DVD's exclusive retailer. At press time, Kraft was even considering having Belichick's breakdowns sponsored. Either way, Kraft expects sales to far exceed the 50,000 benchmark set by the first version.

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 14, Lost 2

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	31-0	at Buffalo
09/14	W	31-10	at Philadelphia
09/21	W	23-16	New York Jets
09/28	L	20-17	at Washington
10/05	W	38-30	Tennessee
10/12	W	17-6	New York Giants
10/19	W	19-13 (OT)	at Miami
10/26	W	9-3	Cleveland
11/03	W	30-26	at Denver
11/16	W	12-0	Dallas
11/23	W	23-20 (OT)	at Houston
11/30	W	38-34	at Indianapolis
12/07	W	12-0	Miami
12/14	W	27-13	Jacksonville
12/20	W	21-16	at New York Jets
12/27	W	31-0	Buffalo

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Smith	182	642	3.5	30	3
Faulk	178	638	3.6	23	0
Cloud	27	118	4.4	42	5
Centers	21	82	3.9	13	0
Brady	42	63	1.5	11	1
T. Brown	6	27	4.5	11	0
Pass	6	27	4.5	11	0
Branch	1	11	11.0	11	0
Klecko	2	5	2.5	5	0
Patten	1	4	4.0	4	0
McCrary	3	3	1.0	4	0
Walter	2	0	0.0	0	0
Patriots	**473**	**1607**	**3.4**	**42**	**9**
Opponents	**401**	**1434**	**3.6**	**23**	**10**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Branch	57	803	14.1	66t	3
Faulk	48	440	9.2	27	0
T. Brown	40	472	11.8	82t	4
Graham	38	409	10.8	38	4
Givens	34	510	15.0	57	6
Fauria	28	285	10.2	28	2
Centers	19	106	5.6	14	1
B. Johnson	16	209	13.1	45	2
Stokes	2	38	19.0	31	0
Smith	14	92	6.6	16	0
Patten	9	140	15.6	42	0
Ward	7	106	15.1	31t	1
Pass	4	21	5.3	11	0
McCrary	2	12	6.0	9	0
Cloud	1	8	8.0	8	0
Patriots	**320**	**3651**	**11.4**	**82t**	**23**
Opponents	**328**	**3485**	**10.6**	**67**	**11**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Brady	527	317	3620	23	12
Davey	7	3	31	0	0
Patriots	**537**	**320**	**3651**	**23**	**13**
Opponents	**618**	**328**	**3485**	**11**	**29**

SACKS

Vrabel 9.5, Seymour 8.0, McGinest 5.5, Harrison 3.0, Bruschi 2.0, Colvin 2.0, Green 2.0, Washington 2.0, Chatham 1.5, Klecko 1.5, Banta-Cain 1.0, Cherry 1.0, Pleasant 1.0, Warren 1.0

Patriots 41.0, Opponents 32.0

t=touchdown

TOMASSO DEROSA

Tedy Bruschi, LB

Tedy Bruschi is a terrific inside playmaker and Ted Johnson, though terribly limited in range, still stuffs the run.

Secondary

Grade: B+

The NFL's decision to emphasize the chuck rule and its planned letter-of-the-law enforcement of the illegal-contact rule stems directly from the Patriots' manhandling of the Indianapolis receivers in the AFC Championship Game. This group, however, can conform to any set of dictates.

Ty Law is at the top of his game but (unfortunately for him) near the middle of his contract. His unhappiness and how the Patriots deal with it will be an ongoing story, and the Pats bought insurance in the form of veterans Otis Smith and Jeff Burris. There's a nice blend of experience (Rodney Harrison) and youth (Eugene Wilson) at safety.

Special teams

Grade: B+

This group got an immediate upgrade with the signing of punter Josh Miller. Ken Walter had more value to the club as a holder than a punter. Adam Vinatieri missed a few more kicks than expected but remains one of the game's money guys, having converted 15 game-winning kicks in his career.

The Patriots always emphasize special-teams play among their younger guys and love Bethel Johnson's burst on kick returns. Johnson led the AFC in kickoff-return average with 28.2 yards per runback. Old hand Troy Brown handles punts. This is a solid, solid unit.

Management

Grade: A

It's difficult to wrap your mind around the idea that Bill Belichick has coached his team to Super Bowl titles in two of the last three seasons. Obviously this is not a cult of personality. But his approach yields consistent results. Belichick and Scott Pioli, the Patriots' vice president of player personnel, are of like minds on the way to construct a team and massage the salary cap. They believe in the draft, of building a large core of their own players, and then filling in the holes with cheaper free agents. Who are we to argue with those big diamond rings?

Bottom line

With a young quarterback and a philosophy based on refreshing the roster through the draft, the Patriots have enough pieces in place to be a dominant team. They rely on role players, giving them the ability to thrive in every situation, and they continually blend the new folks in with a solid core that's grounded in Belichick's methods and unceasing preparation. From the owner through the personnel staff, from the head coach to his staff and then on through the roster, this is in many ways the model of what a franchise ought to be in the salary-cap era.

FINAL GRADE **93**

Patriots ROSTER

Bill Belichick, head coach

Romeo Crennel, defensive coord.-defensive line; **Brian Daboll**, wide receivers; **Jeff Davidson**, asst. offensive line-tight ends; **Ivan Fears**, running backs; **Pepper Johnson**, inside linebackers; **Eric Mangini**, defensive backs; **Dante Scarnecchia**, asst. head coach-offensive line; **Brad Seely**, special teams; **Charlie Weis**, offensive coord.; **Josh McDaniels**, QBs; **Dean Pees**, LBs

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Brady, Tom	QB	6-4	225	8-3-1977	4	Michigan
6	Davey, Rohan	QB	6-2	245	4-14-1978	2	LSU
15	Kingsbury, Kliff	QB	6-3	213	8-9-1979	0	Texas Tech

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
63	Andruzzi, Joe	G	6-3	312	8-23-1975	6	Southern Connecticut St.
68	Ashworth, Tom	T	6-6	305	10-10-1977	2	Colorado
60	Brown, Wilbert	G	6-2	320	5-9-1977	3	Houston
76	Gorin, Brandon	T	6-6	308	7-17-1978	1	Purdue
71	Hochstein, Russ	G	6-4	305	10-7-1977	2	Nebraska
70	Klemm, Adrian	T	6-3	312	5-21-1977	3	Hawaii
67	Koppen, Daniel	C	6-2	296	9-12-1979	1	Boston College
72	Light, Matt	T	6-4	305	6-23-1978	3	Purdue
66	Paxton, Lonie	C	6-2	260	3-13-1978	4	Sacramento State
	Provost, Tim	T	6-5	301	8-24-1980	0	San Jose State

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
31	Centers, Larry	RB	6-1	225	6-1-1968	14	Stephen F. Austin
21	Cloud, Mike	RB	5-10	205	7-1-1975	5	Boston College
41	Crosby, Phillip	RB	6-1	242	11-5-1976	3	Tennessee
28	Dillon, Corey	RB	6-1	225	10-24-1974	7	Washington
33	Faulk, Kevin	RB	5-8	202	6-5-1976	5	LSU
40	MacKenzie, Malaefou	RB	5-10	238	7-24-1979	1	USC
44	McCrary, Fred	RB	6-1	247	9-19-1972	7	Mississippi State
43	Moreau, Frank	RB	6-1	223	9-9-1976	2	Louisville
35	Pass, Patrick	RB	5-10	217	12-31-1977	4	Georgia
32	Smith, Antowain	RB	6-2	232	3-14-1972	7	Houston

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
83	Branch, Deion	WR	5-9	193	7-18-1979	2	Louisville
80	Brown, Troy	WR	5-10	196	7-2-1971	11	Marshall
88	Fauria, Christian	TE	6-4	250	9-22-1971	9	Colorado
18	Gessner, Chas	WR	6-5	215	8-17-1981	0	Brown
87	Givens, David	WR	6-1	212	8-16-1980	2	Notre Dame
82	Graham, Daniel	TE	6-3	257	11-16-1978	2	Colorado
81	Johnson, Bethel	WR	5-11	200	2-11-1979	1	Texas A&M
49	McDermott, Sean	TE	6-4	250	12-5-1976	3	Kansas
86	Patten, David	WR	5-10	190	8-19-1974	7	Western Carolina
85	Stokes, J.J.	WR	6-4	218	10-6-1972	9	UCLA
	Walker, Marquise	WR	6-2	219	12-11-1978	0	Michigan

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
94	Bailey, Rodney	DE	6-3	306	10-7-1979	3	Ohio State
97	Green, Jarvis	DE	6-3	290	1-12-1979	2	LSU
99	Kelley, Ethan	DT	6-2	303	2-12-1980	0	Baylor
90	Klecko, Dan	DT	5-11	283	1-12-1981	1	Temple
55	McGinest, Willie	DE	6-5	270	12-11-1971	10	Southern California
93	Seymour, Richard	DT	6-6	310	10-6-1979	3	Georgia
	Traylor, Keith	DT	6-2	340	9-3-1969	12	Central Oklahoma
94	Warren, Ty	DT	6-5	300	2-6-1981	1	Texas A&M

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Burris, Jeff	CB	6-1	190	6-7-1972	10	Notre Dame
30	Cherry, Je'Rod	S	6-1	210	5-30-1973	8	California
37	Harrison, Rodney	S	6-1	220	12-15-1972	10	Western Illinois
24	Law, Ty	CB	5-11	200	2-10-1974	9	Michigan
39	Mayer, Shawn	S	6-1	202	3-4-1979	1	Penn State
31	Perry, Jason	S	6-1	200	8-1-1976	4	North Carolina State
38	Poole, Tyrone	CB	5-8	188	2-3-1972	8	Fort Valley State
22	Samuel, Asante	CB	5-10	185	1-6-1981	1	UCF
23	Smith, Otis	CB	5-11	198	10-22-1965	13	Missouri
26	Wilson, Eugene	S	5-10	195	8-17-1980	1	Illinois

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
48	Banta-Cain, Tully	LB	6-2	254	8-28-1980	1	California
54	Bruschi, Tedy	LB	6-1	247	6-9-1973	8	Arizona
58	Chatham, Matt	LB	6-4	250	6-28-1977	4	South Dakota
59	Colvin, Rosevelt	LB	6-3	250	9-5-1977	5	Purdue
51	Davis, Don	LB	6-1	235	12-17-1972	8	Kansas
53	Izzo, Larry	LB	5-10	228	9-26-1974	7	Rice
52	Johnson, Ted	LB	6-4	253	12-4-1972	9	Colorado
90	Kurpeikis, Justin	LB	6-3	254	7-17-1977	2	Penn State
95	Phifer, Roman	LB	6-2	248	3-5-1968	13	UCLA
50	Vrabel, Mike	LB	6-4	261	8-14-1975	7	Ohio State

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Miller, Josh	P	6-4	225	7-14-1970	8	Arizona
4	Vinatieri, Adam	K	6-1	202	12-28-1972	8	South Dakota State

BILL COOKE/AP WIDE WORLD

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	21	Wilfork, Vince	DT	6-1	344	11-4-81	Miami (FL)
1	32	Watson, Ben	TE	6-3	253	12-17-80	Georgia
2	31	Hill, Marquise	DE	6-6	300	8-7-82	LSU
3	32	Scott, Guss	S	5-10	198	5-21-82	Florida
4	17	Reid, Dexter	S	5-10	203	3-18-81	North Carolina
4	32	Cobbs, Cedric	RB	6-1	221	1-9-81	Arkansas
5	32	Sam, P.K.	WR	6-1	196	12-26-83	Florida State
7	32	Morton, Christian	CB	6-1	188	4-28-81	Illinois

TOMASSO DEROSA

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Tom Brady
FB	Fred McCrary
RB	Corey Dillon
LT	Matt Light
LG	Russ Hochstein
C	Dan Koppen
RG	Joe Andruzzi
RT	Tom Ashworth
TE	Christian Fauria
WR	David Givens
WR	Deion Branch

DEFENSE

LE	Ty Warren
NT	Keith Traylor
RE	Richard Seymour
OLB	Rosevelt Colvin
ILB	Roman Phifer
ILB	Tedy Bruschi
OLB	Mike Vrabel
LCB	Ty Law
RCB	Tyrone Poole
SS	Rodney Harrison
FS	Eugene Wilson

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Josh Miller
K	Adam Vinatieri
PR	Troy Brown
KR	Bethel Johnson

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	**vs. Indianapolis**	
Sept. 9		9:00
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 2	**@ Arizona**	
Sept. 19		4:15
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 3	**OPEN DATE**	
WEEK 4	**@ Buffalo**	
Oct. 3		1:00
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 5	**vs. Miami**	
Oct. 10		1:00
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 6	**vs. Seattle**	
Oct. 17		1:00
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 7	**vs. New York Jets**	
Oct. 24		4:05
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 8	**@ Pittsburgh**	
Oct. 31		4:15
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 9	**@ St. Louis**	
Nov. 7		4:15
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 10	**vs. Buffalo**	
Nov. 14		8:30
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 11	**@ Kansas City**	
Nov. 22		9:00
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 12	**vs. Baltimore**	
Nov. 28		1:00
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 13	**@ Cleveland**	
Dec. 5		1:00
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 14	**vs. Cincinnati**	
Dec. 12		1:00
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 15	**@ Miami**	
Dec. 20		9:00
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 16	**@ New York Jets**	
Dec. 26		4:05
W / L	**Score:**	
WEEK 17	**vs. San Francisco**	
Jan. 2		1:00
W / L	**Score:**	

All times Eastern

AFC EAST AFC NORTH AFC SOUTH AFC WEST NFC EAST NFC NORTH NFC SOUTH NFC WEST

MIAMI DOLPHINS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 2 2003 RECORD: 10-6

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Chris Akins, S** (NE)
- **Reggie Howard, CB** (CAR)
- **Jeno James, G** (CAR)
- **Damion McIntosh, T** (SD)
- **Sammy Morris, RB** (BUF)
- **John St. Clair, T** (STL)
- **Terrence Wilkins, WR** (IND)
- **A.J. Feeley, QB** (Trade, PHI)
- **David Boston, WR** (Trade, SD)

STADIUM FACTS

Pro Player Stadium

Capacity: **75,540** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **888-346-7849**
Web site: **www.miamidolphins.com**

Avg. Attendance **73,473**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **97.3**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **46.46**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.50 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.00 / 14oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Ricky Williams broke the Dolphins' single-season record for rushing attempts for the second consecutive season with 392 last year. He had 383 attempts in 2002.

STAT: A Miami Dolphin has led the AFC in sacks in three of the past four seasons: Trace Armstrong (2000), Jason Taylor (2002) and Adewale Ogunleye (2003).

LOOK IT UP: The 2003 Dolphins were the first AFC team since the Bengals and Seahawks in 1986 to win at least 10 games during the regular season and not make the playoffs.

Fish still have the Feel(ey) of a good team that can't quite get over the hump

Miami in search of offense that doesn't require the legs of Ricky Williams

Miami might be the NFL's most frustrating team. At its best, it wins in classic style, with a punishing ground game and a defense that has almost no weaknesses. While this style should lend itself to postseason success, the Dolphins simply cannot get past the first 16 games.

The offensive line broke down last season and Ricky Williams didn't always get himself squared to the line of scrimmage. And, of course, Jay Fiedler had his usual bout with injuries and the Dolphins struggled without him.

Unlike some teams, the Dolphins rewarded coach Dave Wannstedt for his 10-win season with a contract extension. That's 19 wins over two playoff-less seasons. What's the motto here? "Dare to be mediocre?"

Offensive line — Grade: B-

The Dolphins set out to tear this group apart and rebuild it and did exactly that. Left tackle Wade Smith is the only holdover. Everyone else is gone, purged at the start of the free-agency period.

The Dolphins needed to get bigger in the interior to open up the inside running game and Jeno James, at left guard, should help. Seth McKinney figures to take over at center for the departed Tim Ruddy. Damion McIntosh probably will work in somewhere when he returns from surgery in August. Until then, a very shaky John St. Clair and No. 1 pick Vernon Carey will likely hold down the other side. Chemistry, anyone?

Quarterbacks — Grade: C+

This should be interesting. Not necessarily good, but interesting. The trade for A.J. Feeley, who was Philadelphia's No. 3 quarterback last year, and Fiedler's decision to stay and accept a renegotiated contract, should set up a curious battle for the starting job.

Feeley didn't take a snap last year; Fiedler was injured (now there's news) and thereby lost the front office's confidence that he could show up every week to lead the team. Fiedler is capable,

DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

Ricky Williams, RB

He said it:

"In this league, you can run the ball to win ... but you have to throw the ball to score points."
—Dave Wannstedt

GLENN DANFORTH

if fragile. Feeley's really a mystery, living off the five games he started in 2002 with the Eagles after injuries to Donovan McNabb and Koy Detmer.

Running backs

Grade: A-

Williams gave every hint of being the enigmatic player he was in his previous life with New Orleans. What's this acknowledgement about not always running hard? With almost 400 carries, it's amazing he could run at all. Williams remains a 20-25-attempt back, but the Dolphins need a lot more variety in their offense to really exploit his skills.

Fullback Rob Konrad does an excellent job as the lead blocker and has good hands. Travis Minor is a nice changeup when the Dolphins take Williams out. Sammy Morris figures on special teams.

Receivers

Grade: B-

Chris Chambers shows star potential. His 11 TD catches last season were the most by a Dolphins wide receiver since Mark Clayton in 1991. He bounced back nicely after a sub-par 2002 campaign but is probably the player most hurt by Miami's instability at quarterback.

David Boston is a potent threat with Jerry Sullivan, his former position coach at Arizona, tutoring him. He's also been a behavior problem. The rest of these guys are regular guys. Derrius Thompson looks like a decent third receiver. So the Dolphins really could stand a No. 4.

Tight end Randy McMichael experienced some rough moments late in the season and needs to improve his concentration.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	288.1	24
Rushing	113.6	17
Passing	174.5	26
Scoring	311	17
Punt Returns	9.3	16
Kick Returns	21.1	21
Red Zone TD %	48.8	17
Total Defense	299.2	10
Against Rush	90.8	5
Against Pass	208.4	19
Points Allowed	261	3
Interceptions	22	7
Sacks	44	3
Turnover Diff.	+2	10T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
266	99	145	22

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
43	185	21	13

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
14	17	4	3

DOLPHINS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **DAN MARINO**
   Career Passing Yards: **61,361**
   Career TD Passes: **420**
2. **BOB GRIESE**
   Career Passing Yards: **25,092**
   Career TD Passes: **192**
3. **EARL MORRALL**
   Career Passing Yards: **20,809**
   Career TD Passes: **161**

TONY TOMSIC/SPORTSCHROME

Defensive line

Grade: A-

The Dolphins were the only team not to allow a 100-yard rusher last season. That sort of determination starts up front. The team is powerful inside and swift on the outside, with left end Adewale Ogunleye having a career season (15 sacks) in a contract year. Imagine the pressure on Jason Taylor. He had 13 sacks and people think he slipped.

Aside from having capable starters, the Dolphins can also rely on a great bench and get quality time from supersubs like Jeff Zgonina and David Bowens.

Linebackers

Grade: B+

Zach Thomas plugs holes and still has decent range from sideline to sideline. He's the classic overachiever. Junior Seau had more gas in his tank than people gave him credit for and proved to be relatively durable. Morlon Greenwood did a nice job over the tight end and has only begun to tap his talent. This group is extremely solid and experienced. If it lacks anything, it is speed in coverage.

Secondary

Grade: B

The vaunted cornerback tandem of Patrick Surtain and Sam Madison has begun to show some cracks and most of the fingers that are pointed are aimed at Madison, who was the subject of some trade rumors and a contract restructuring. Even if they are not the suffocating shutdown players of several years back, this is a pair that can be counted in single coverage. There's depth, too, here with Reggie Howard as the third corner and rookie Will Poole. Sammy Knight lacks speed but adds other

Fans critical of front office's 'shuck-and-jive' offseason

The Dolphins ran into a public-relations buzz saw when the hiring of Dan Marino as senior vice president of operations turned out to be only the team's second-biggest offseason story.

The biggest: when Marino turned around and quit less than a month into the job.

The team had a series of bumps in the road, including:

- Scheduling a news conference to announce Damion McIntosh as its new starting tackle before waiting for the physical, which McIntosh failed because of bad ankles. He eventually passed it.
- Acquiring ex-Philadelphia backup quarterback A.J. Feeley to "replace" Jay Fiedler, only to announce that Fiedler would be back to compete for the starting job days after the incumbent starter sought a trade.
- The promotion of Rick Spielman to general manager, which stripped coach Dave Wannstedt of the personnel control he'd held over the past four years.

But nothing topped the Marino debacle. Dolphins owner Wayne Huizenga had discussed a job within the organization with Marino since the time he retired after the 2000 season, and was willing to be flexible with the job description. Jason Cole, Dolphin beat writer for the *Miami Herald*, says Marino quickly discovered he was in over his head. The job offered no real authority—he'd be Huizenga's eyes and ears but only in big-picture decisions, with Spielman making the day-to-day moves—but Marino would still need to be available to the Dolphins for 60-plus hours a week. Compared with Marino's high-profile chores as an NFL analyst for CBS and HBO, it didn't hold much appeal.

"Dan wants to be a celebrity, to be on TV and say his opinion to make money and play golf," Cole says. "Then he realized, 'Oh, I gotta go and sit on a metal bleacher at the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala.' He had no notepad, no pen. The most remarkable thing he said after two hours was, 'My ass is frozen.'"

Cole says Marino should have known what he was getting into. Moreover, he says, Huizenga should have known that Marino, who has a busy life (with six kids) and who "never liked meetings that much even as a player," would be the wrong choice for a front-office position.

Dan Marino

ALAN DIAZ/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

If the *Herald's* Web site message board is any indication, Dolphin fans are pretty unhappy with the way their team handled the offseason.

"The public reaction has been vicious," Cole says. "Fans think the whole front-office shuffle was a shuck-and-jive. They don't trust the team."

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 10, Lost 6

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	21-20	Houston
09/14	W	21-10	at New York Jets
09/21	W	17-7	Buffalo
10/05	W	23-10	at New York Giants
10/12	W	24-10	at Jacksonville
10/19	L	19-13 (OT)	New England
10/27	W	26-10	at San Diego
11/02	L	23-17	Indianapolis
11/09	L	31-7	at Tennessee
11/16	W	9-6 (OT)	Baltimore
11/23	W	24-23	Washington
11/27	W	40-21	at Dallas
12/07	L	12-0	at New England
12/15	L	34-27	Philadelphia
12/21	W	20-3	at Buffalo
12/28	W	23-21	New York Jets

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
R. Williams	392	1372	3.5	45	9
Minor	41	193	4.7	26	1
Fiedler	34	88	2.6	14	3
McKnight	2	75	37.5	68t	1
Chambers	4	30	7.5	12	0
Turk	3	30	10.0	23	0
Konrad	4	17	4.3	11	0
Griese	5	15	3.0	9	0
Rosenfels	1	-1	-1.0	-1	0
O. Ayanbadejo	1	-2	-2.0	-2	0
Dolphins	**487**	**1817**	**3.7**	**68t**	**14**
Opponents	**441**	**1452**	**3.3**	**28**	**11**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Chambers	64	963	15.0	57t	11
R. Williams	50	351	7.0	59	1
McMichael	49	598	12.2	46	2
Thompson	26	359	13.8	31	0
McKnight	23	285	12.4	80t	2
Konrad	16	166	10.4	25	0
O. Ayanbadejo	12	53	4.4	12	0
Lee	7	110	15.7	25	1
Gadsden	4	48	12.0	23	0
Minor	4	13	3.3	12	0
Newson	2	55	27.5	37	0
Dolphins	**257**	**3001**	**11.7**	**80t**	**17**
Opponents	**319**	**3588**	**11.2**	**82t**	**12**

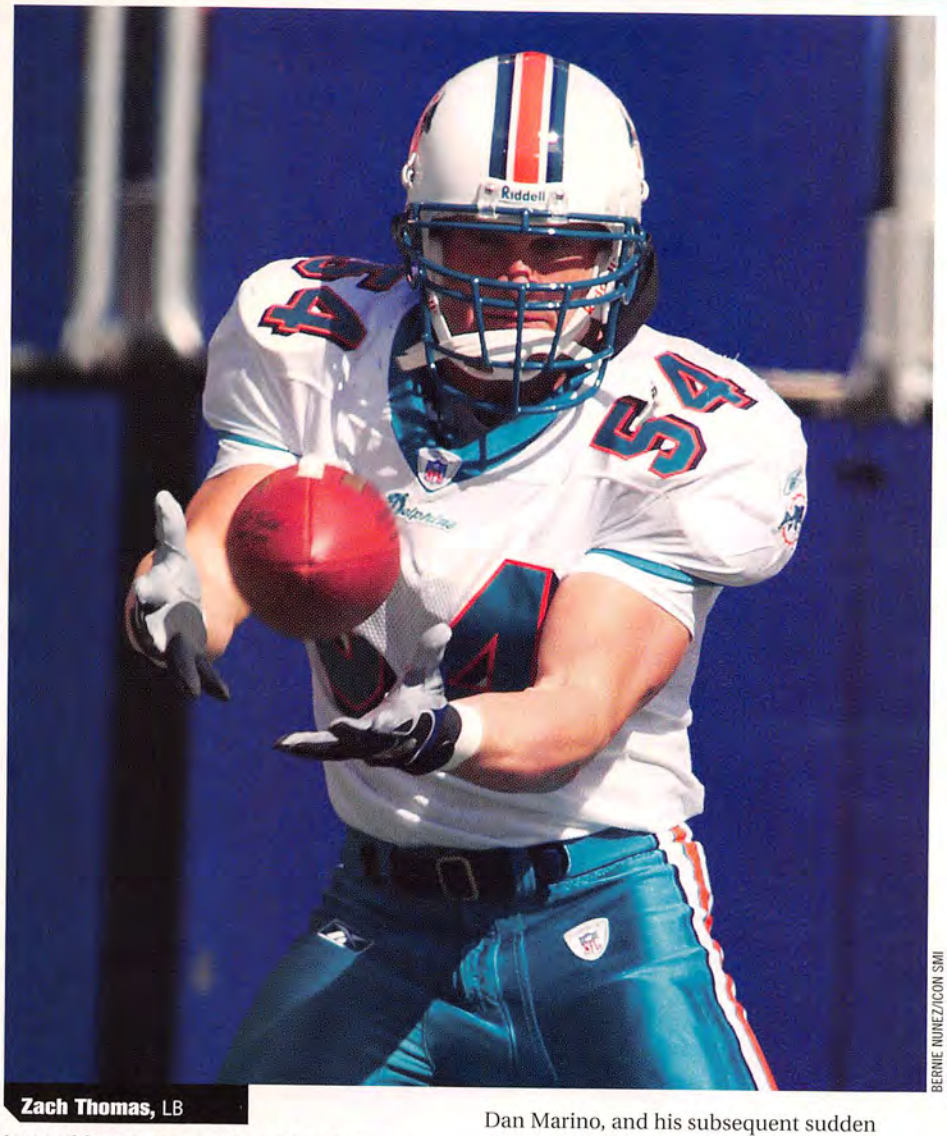
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Fiedler	314	179	2138	11	13
Griese	130	74	813	5	6
Rosenfels	6	4	50	1	0
Dolphins	**450**	**257**	**3001**	**17**	**19**
Opponents	**529**	**319**	**3588**	**12**	**22**

SACKS

Ogunleye 15.0, Taylor 13.0, Seau 3.0, Zgonina 3.0, J. Williams 2.5, T. Bowens 2.0, Burnett 2.0, D. Bowens 1.0, Freeman 1.0, Thomas 1.0, Greenwood 0.5

Dolphins 44.0, Opponents 31.0

t=touchdown



Zach Thomas, LB

BERNIE NUNEZ/ICON SMI

intangibles at strong safety. He's always around the ball and has a great knack for anticipation. Arturo Freeman moves back in as a starter at safety with the release of Brock Marion, but Antuan Edwards might push him.

Special teams

Grade: B

They'll get help from Sammy Morris, who was one of Buffalo's leaders on coverage units. There's a real need to find someone to help give the Fish field position on punt returns; Charles Rogers was a disaster of a signing a year ago. Olindo Mare had some weird moments last season but is generally a dependable and consistent kicker with decent range, despite owner Wayne Huizenga's finger-pointing.

Management

Grade: B-

This is the classic conundrum, along the lines of a tree falling in the forest and not necessarily making a noise. The Dolphins win consistently but don't reach the playoffs. And when they do, they crash to the ground without a sound. The offseason hiring of Dan Marino, and his subsequent sudden departure, underscored this club's desire to look as if it were dealing with its hollow-core issues without actually doing so. Everyone in this organization is capable; excellence has proved elusive. Maybe the bold moves pay off. Maybe heads roll if they don't.

Bottom line

Conventional wisdom says you can't fire the team, so fire the coach. But after another failure to reach the playoffs, the club instead extended Wannstedt's deal by two years and ditched most of the offensive line. The Dolphins can't live off their defense forever and simply must develop a big-time passing game. Nothing says Feeley can do that.

Miami needs to finish a season the way it starts and can't keep coming up small in big games. That's as much a reflection on the players as it is on Wannstedt.

FINAL GRADE **86**

Dolphins ROSTER

Dave Wannstedt, head coach

Keith Armstrong, special teams; **Jim Bates,** defensive coord.; **Clarence Brooks,** defensive line; **Joel Collier,** running backs; **Jerry Sullivan,** wide receivers; **Judd Garrett,** off. asst./quarterbacks; **Chris Foerster,** tight ends; **Bill Lewis,** defensive nickel package; **Bernie Parmalee,** RBs; **Mel Phillips,** secondary; **Glenn Pires,** asst. defensive line; **Bob Sanders,** linebackers; **Tony Wise,** offensive line; **Marc Trestman,** asst. head coach/quarterbacks

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
14	Feeley, A.J.	QB	6-3	225	5-16-1977	2	Oregon
9	Fiedler, Jay	QB	6-2	225	12-29-1971	6	Dartmouth
18	Rosenfels, Sage	QB	6-4	222	3-6-1978	2	Iowa State
5	Stoerner, Clint	QB	6-2	225	12-29-1977	2	Arkansas

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
70	Bedell, Brad	T	6-4	299	2-12-1977	2	Colorado
64	Goodspeed, Dan	G	6-6	300	5-20-1977	1	Kent State
78	James, Jeno	G	6-3	310	1-12-1977	4	Auburn
60	Jerman, Greg	T	6-5	300	1-24-1979	2	Baylor
77	McIntosh, Damion	T	6-4	325	3-25-1977	4	Kansas State
68	McKinney, Seth	C	6-3	305	6-12-1979	2	Texas A&M
74	Smith, Wade	T	6-4	300	4-26-1981	1	Memphis
70	St. Clair, John	T	6-4	320	7-15-1977	2	Virginia
69	Whitley, Taylor	G	6-4	315	2-21-1980	0	Texas A&M
73	Yates, Billy	G	6-2	305	4-15-1980	1	Texas A&M

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
26	Henry, Leonard	RB	6-1	210	1-5-1978	0	East Carolina
44	Konrad, Rob	RB	6-3	255	11-12-1976	5	Syracuse
28	Minor, Travis	RB	5-10	205	6-30-1979	3	Florida State
31	Morris, Sammy	RB	6-1	220	3-23-1977	4	Texas Tech
34	Williams, Ricky	RB	5-10	226	5-21-1977	5	Texas

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
89	Boston, David	WR	6-2	240	8-19-1978	5	Ohio State
84	Chambers, Chris	WR	5-11	210	8-12-1978	3	Wisconsin
	Davis, Nick	WR	6-1	180	10-6-1979	2	Wisconsin
86	Gadsden, Oronde	WR	6-2	215	8-20-1971	6	Winston-Salem
88	Jones, John	TE	6-4	255	4-4-1975	4	Indiana (PA)
85	Lee, Donald	TE	6-3	255	8-31-1980	1	Mississippi State
81	McMichael, Randy	TE	6-3	250	6-28-1979	2	Georgia
13	Minnis, Marvin	WR	6-1	172	2-6-1977	2	Florida State
82	Newson, Kendall	WR	6-1	197	3-5-1980	1	Middle Tennessee State
89	Perry, Ed	TE	6-4	270	9-1-1974	6	James Madison
83	Simmons, Sam	WR	5-9	200	11-25-1979	1	Northwestern
88	Thompson, Derrius	WR	6-2	220	7-5-1977	5	Baylor
87	Tolver, J.R.	WR	6-1	205	1-13-1980	0	San Diego State
	Wilkins, Terrence	WR	5-10	180	7-29-1975	5	Virginia

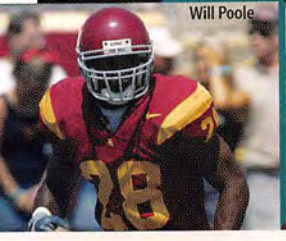
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
70	Bolling, Nate	DT	6-4	287	1-10-1979	0	Wake Forest
96	Bowens, David	DE	6-3	260	7-3-1977	5	Western Illinois
95	Bowens, Tim	DT	6-4	325	2-7-1973	10	Mississippi
76	Brown, Troy	DE	6-1	280	9-29-1380	0	memphis
64	Chester, Larry	DT	6-2	325	10-17-1975	6	Temple
92	Flemons, Ronald	DE	6-5	265	10-20-1979	2	Texas A&M
98	Grigsby, Otis	DE	6-3	260	11-19-1980	0	Kentucky
94	Hunt, Aaron	DE	6-3	270	6-19-1980	0	Texas Tech
93	Ogunleye, Adewale	DE	6-4	260	8-9-1977	3	Indiana
94	Romero, Dario	DT	6-3	305	4-13-1978	1	Eastern Washington
99	Taylor, Jason	DE	6-6	255	9-1-1974	7	Akron
91	Williams, Jay	DE	6-3	275	10-13-1971	9	Wake Forest
92	Zgonina, Jeff	DT	6-2	285	5-24-1970	11	Purdue

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Akins, Chris	S	5-11	200	11-29-1976	5	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
	Edwards, Antuan	S	6-1	212	5-26-1977	5	Clemson
20	Freeman, Arturo	S	6-1	198	10-27-1976	4	South Carolina
	Howard, Reggie	CB	6-1	190	5-17-1977	4	Memphis
24	Knight, Sammy	S	6-1	215	9-10-1975	7	Southern California
29	Madison, Sam	CB	5-11	185	4-23-1974	7	Louisville
23	Surtain, Patrick	CB	5-11	192	6-19-1976	6	Southern Mississippi
22	Wooden, Shawn	S	5-11	205	10-23-1973	8	Notre Dame

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Ayanbadejo, Brendon	LB	6-1	230	9-6-1976	1	UCLA
52	Greenwood, Morlon	LB	6-1	238	7-17-1978	3	Syracuse
57	Jenkins, Corey	LB	6-1	222	8-25-1976	1	South Carolina
58	Moore, Eddie	LB	6-1	237	7-5-1980	0	Tennessee
55	Seau, Junior	LB	6-3	250	1-19-1969	14	Southern California
54	Thomas, Zach	LB	5-11	230	9-1-1973	8	Texas Tech

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
10	Mare, Olindo	K	5-10	190	6-6-1973	7	Syracuse
1	Turk, Matt	P	6-5	250	6-16-1968	9	Wisconsin-Whitewater

(L TO R): ROBERT LEITER/ICON SMI; DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS


Will Poole

LIVIO SUAREZ/A.I.M.

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	A.J. Feeley
FB	Rob Konrad
RB	Ricky Williams
LT	Wade Smith
LG	Jeno James
C	Seth McKinney
RG	Vernon Carey
RT	John St. Clair
TE	Randy McMichael
WR	David Boston
WR	Chris Chambers

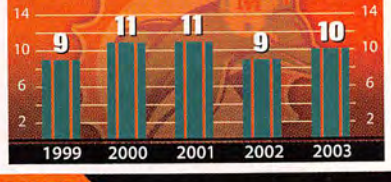
DEFENSE

LE	Adewale Ogunleye
LT	Tim Bowens
RT	Larry Chester
RE	Jason Taylor
LLB	Morlon Greenwood
MLB	Zach Thomas
RLB	Junior Seau
LCB	Patrick Surtain
RCB	Sam Madison
SS	Sammy Knight
FS	Arturo Freeman

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Matt Turk
K	Olindo Mare
PR	Sam Simmons
KR	Travis Minor

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND



2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	19	Carey, Vernon	G-T	6-4	363	7-13-81	Miami (FL)
4	6	Poole, Will	CB	5-10	193	7-24-81	USC
5	28	Bua, Tony	S	5-11	218	2-11-80	Arkansas
6	9	Hadnot, Rex	C	6-2	323	1-28-82	Houston
7	20	Pape, Tony	G	6-6	323	9-29-81	Michigan
7	21	Pope, Derrick	LB	6-1	226	5-4-82	Alabama

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	vs. Tennessee	
Sept. 12		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 2	@ Cincinnati	
Sept. 19		8:30
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 3	vs. Pittsburgh	
Sept. 26		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 4	vs. New York Jets	
Oct. 3		4:15
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 5	@ New England	
Oct. 10		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 6	@ Buffalo	
Oct. 17		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 7	vs. St. Louis	
Oct. 24		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 8	@ New York Jets	
Nov. 1		9:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 9	vs. Arizona	
Nov. 7		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 10	OPEN DATE	
WEEK 11	@ Seattle	
Nov. 21		4:05
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 12	@ San Francisco	
Nov. 28		4:15
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 13	vs. Buffalo	
Dec. 5		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 14	@ Denver	
Dec. 12		4:05
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 15	vs. New England	
Dec. 20		9:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 16	vs. Cleveland	
Dec. 26		8:30
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 17	@ Baltimore	
Jan. 2		1:00
W/L	Score:	

All times Eastern

AFC EAST | AFC NORTH | AFC SOUTH | AFC WEST | NFC EAST | NFC NORTH | NFC SOUTH | NFC WEST

BUFFALO BILLS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 3 2003 RECORD: 6-10

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Chris Villarrial, G** (CHI)
- **Troy Vincent, CB** (PHI)
- **Oliver Gibson, DT** (CIN)

STADIUM FACTS

Ralph Wilson Stadium

Capacity: **73,967** Turf: **Artificial**
Tickets: **877-228-4257**
Web site: **www.buffalobills.com**

Avg. Attendance **73,015**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **98.7**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$42.55**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$2.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.50 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.50 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Van Miller, the voice of the Bills for 37 years, retired at the end of last season. His stint is believed to be the longest ever for a play-by-play announcer with one team.

STAT: Buffalo opponents posted a combined winning percentage of .570 last season. That tied the Bills with Houston for the toughest schedule faced in the NFL in 2003.

LOOK IT UP: The Bills are just the third team since 1940 to open the regular season with a shutout, and then end the season by being shut out (1976 Oilers, 1979 Chiefs).

THE COUNT:
18 – Number of Bills takeaways last season, fewest in the NFL.
2-25 – Buffalo's record over the last three years when trailing after three quarters.
365 – Times Drew Bledsoe has been sacked in his NFL career.

A playoff trip for Buffalo? It's all Mularkey

Offense-minded new coach must instill a fresh sense of pride in stagnant franchise

The Bills were everybody's dark-horse pick for greatness last year and lived up to that expectation for about two weeks. Then came the deluge.

Buffalo couldn't score or do much of anything offensively and the end of Gregg Williams' short run as coach approached like a blizzard coming off Lake Erie. New coach Mike Mularkey doesn't get a whole lot of new pieces to work with, so attitude and style will count for a lot. He's going to have to find ways to keep Drew Bledsoe from getting buried by the pass rush, generate some points and make the Bills more competitive in a division with no other weak teams.

Well, no one said it was going to be easy. He'll at least have a healthy Willis McGahee, which Williams did not, and the offense will welcome a knowledgeable, humane staff.

Offensive line

Grade: C+

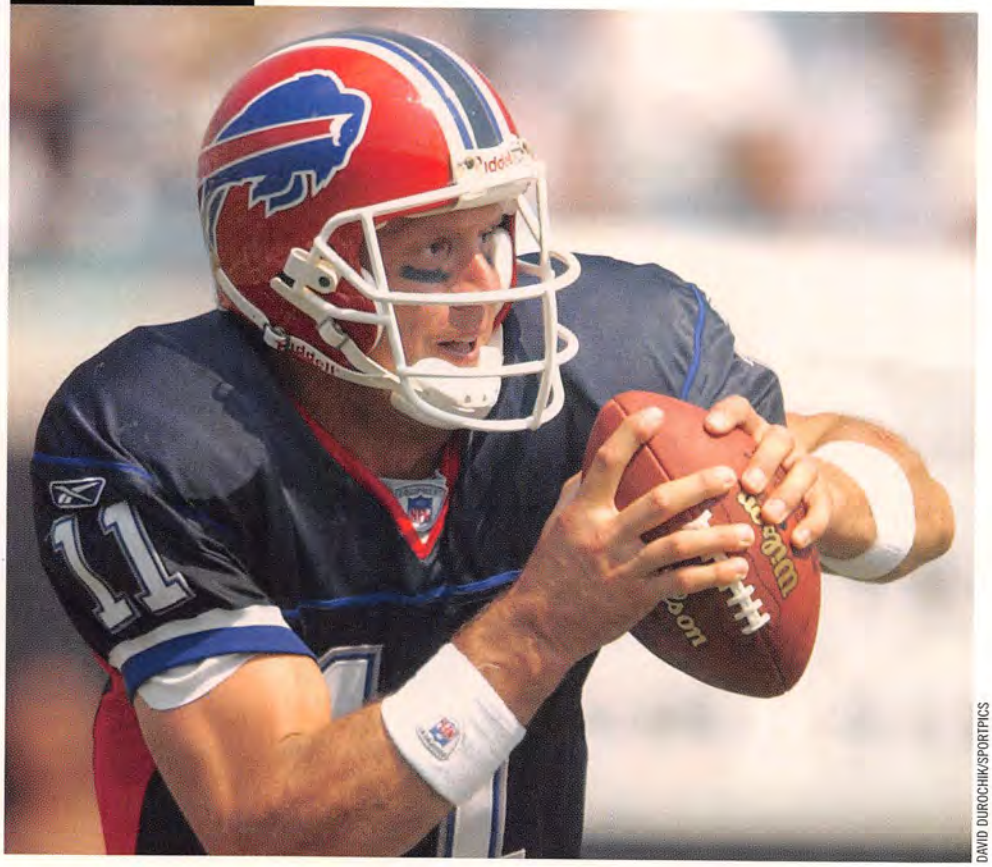
From the middle to the tight end, this group could be decent and open some running lanes. Much is expected of right tackle Mike Williams, and he gets some quality help from one of the only free agents the club signed, right guard Chris Villarrial. The Bills exercised an option to keep center Trey Teague. Replacing Ruben Brown should not be as difficult as it sounds. Pass protection is going to be the big question for a team that allowed 51 sacks.

Quarterbacks

Grade: C+

Bledsoe rarely seemed comfortable in the old offensive scheme implemented by Kevin Gilbride, who earned the nickname "Kevin Killdrive." Bledsoe has a strong arm and he's not old, but he has been pounded pretty hard the last few years. This is the year that either saves his career or signals the end of it. He's not very

Drew Bledsoe, QB



DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

mobile, so he needs much better protection than he has seen. Rookie J.P. Losman is the future, not the present.

The Bills struck an agreement to restructure Bledsoe's contract in late April, which will keep them from having to pay a costly option bonus in November to retain him. The deal assured that Bledsoe will be around past this season to help ease Losman into the full-time QB job when he's ready. Bledsoe, 32, coming off one of the worst seasons of his career, completed 274 of 471 passes for 2,860 yards with 11 touchdowns and 12 interceptions last season. His passer rating of 73.0 was his worst since 1995.

Losman, a cocky, 6-2, 220-pounder with great athleticism and a cannon arm, threw for 3,077 yards and 33 touchdowns last season at Tulane. He's the first quarterback Buffalo has taken in the first round since Jim Kelly.

Running backs

Grade: B-

Travis Henry and McGahee could produce a solid one-two punch, though there is speculation that Henry could be traded. Henry battled through a slew of injuries last season and carried the club on his back in a couple of games. McGahee never played a snap while recovering from a college knee injury, but the former Miami Hurricane star should add breakaway speed and power. Losing fullback Sam Gash hurts. Joe Burns and Daimon Shelton are not adequate replacements.

Depth? Not here.

Receivers

Grade: B-

So much hinges on Eric Moulds and his health. Did he slip last year because of injuries or because Peerless Price was gone? Moulds should be a premier deep threat, but he won't be if the Bills don't give their passer time to look downfield. Bledsoe was sacked 49 times last year.

Josh Reed has yet to emerge as a true complement to Moulds and drops too many passes, so the Bills rolled the dice and used their first pick of the draft to select Wisconsin's highly skilled but oft-injured wideout, Lee Evans, who averaged almost 20 yards per catch in his four-year Big Ten career. The Bills are gambling he'll stay healthy despite previous surgeries on both knees. He'll knock Reed out of the lineup.

Mularkey's offense is not likely to focus on tight ends in a receiving capacity.

Defensive line

Grade: B-

The run-stuffing interior of Pat Williams and Sam Adams is meaty and solid (OK, jiggly, but you get the idea). Right end Aaron Schobel has a high motor and gets after the passer. But the Bills need more pressure as a unit. Chris Kelsay could eventually take over at left end for Ryan Denney and maybe add another burst off the edge. Veteran Oliver Gibson should allow the two tubs inside a brief blow now and again.

Linebackers

Grade: B

Jeff Posey did not give the Bills the outside pass rush they anticipated when they signed him last year. But it's not easy to generate sacks while playing over the tight end. Takeo Spikes is an active weakside linebacker who can run and cover. Undersized London Fletcher anchors the middle, is always around the ball and loves to tackle. This is a solid group that needs to be more productive.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	271.8	30
Rushing	104.0	21
Passing	167.8	28
Scoring	243	30T
Punt Returns	6.0	31
Kick Returns	21.7	12
Red Zone TD %	46.7	22
Total Defense	269.6	2
Against Rush	100.4	8
Against Pass	169.2	2
Points Allowed	279	5
Interceptions	10	30T
Sacks	38	9
Turnover Diff.	-16	31T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
268	96	150	22

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
45	186	21	14

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
13	11	3	3

BILLS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **JIM KELLY**
   Career Passing Yards: **35,467**
   Career TD Passes: **237**
2. **JOE FERGUSON**
   Career Passing Yards: **29,817**
   Career TD Passes: **196**
3. **JACK KEMP**
   Career Passing Yards: **21,218**
   Career TD Passes: **114**

FINALSHOT/JRP

Mularkey will rely on old, new friends as new coach of Bills

When Gregg Williams took over as coach of the Bills three years ago, he had no head-coaching experience but still surrounded himself with a relatively young, inexperienced staff. Six assistants had no prior NFL experience and the overall experience was only six years in the league.

When Mike Mularkey, 42, was given a club-record, five-year, $7.5-million contract to replace Williams this offseason, it quickly became clear he would take a different approach. His staff averages 11 years of NFL experience, with four guys older than 50, most notably quarterbacks coach Sam Wyche.

That's not to say Mularkey doesn't trust his own judgment. He's clearly willing to do things differently. Unlike most new head coaches, Mularkey kept on four defensive coaches from the previous staff, including coordinator Jerry Gray, who helped the Bills' defense rank second in the NFL last season. Mularkey, however, who was previously the Steelers' offensive coordinator, plans to have input on defense.

"There are things defenses don't know that I can throw onto the table without disrupting their schemes right now," Mularkey says. "And as I get more comfortable and learn the terminology, I'll do even more."

But Mularkey is also willing to trust those with the gray hair of experience, especially Wyche, who had been out of the NFL since having his vocal cord cut during heart surgery in 1999.

Wyche offers 12 years of NFL head-coaching experience, first with Cincinnati, which he led to the Super Bowl in 1982, then with Tampa Bay, where he gave an ex-jock-turned-software salesman (Mularkey) his first NFL coaching job. Wyche, 59, also had Buffalo offensive line coach Jim McNally on his staff in Cincinnati, Bills conditioning coach Brad Roll in Tampa Bay and defensive line coach Tim Krumrie as a player with the Bengals.

"Sam is a good friend and a creative mind with a lot of experience with quarterbacks," Mularkey says.

Now Wyche, who helped nurture Joe Montana as a San Francisco assistant and Boomer Esiason as the head man in Cincinnati, is being asked to revive Drew Bledsoe's career.

"Drew did not have the best year last year," Mularkey says. "We'll tinker with some things to try and make him more efficient."

But Bledsoe isn't the only one who will learn at Wyche's feet.

"He's a support system for me," Mularkey says. "There are so many people pulling at you (as a head coach), you have to get your priorities straight. So if you have anyone with Sam's experience, you have to pay special attention."

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 6, Lost 10

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	31-0	New England
09/14	W	38-17	at Jacksonville
09/21	L	17-7	at Miami
09/28	L	23-13	Philadelphia
10/05	W	22-16 (OT)	Cincinnati
10/12	L	30-5	at New York Jets
10/19	W	24-7	Washington
10/26	L	38-3	at Kansas City
11/09	L	10-6	at Dallas
11/16	L	12-10	Houston
11/23	L	17-14	Indianapolis
11/30	W	24-7	at New York Giants
12/07	W	17-6	New York Jets
12/14	L	28-26	at Tennessee
12/21	L	20-3	Miami
12/27	L	31-0	at New England

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Henry	331	1356	4.1	64	10
Burns	39	113	2.9	12	0
Morris	19	70	3.7	12	1
Reed	3	38	12.7	16	0
Bledsoe	24	29	1.2	11	2
Moorman	1	21	21.0	21	0
A. Brown	1	17	17.0	17	0
Neufeld	1	14	14.0	14	0
T. Brown	1	5	5.0	5	0
Simonton	2	4	2.0	2	0
Gash	1	3	3.0	3	0
Van Pelt	4	-6	-1.5	-1	0
Bills	**427**	**1664**	**3.9**	**64**	**13**
Opponents	**464**	**1606**	**3.5**	**62t**	**11**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Moulds	64	780	12.2	49	1
Reed	58	588	10.1	26	2
Shaw	56	732	13.1	54t	4
Campbell	34	339	10.0	31	1
Henry	28	158	5.6	18	1
Morris	14	100	7.1	24	0
Gash	11	83	7.5	18	0
Coleman	8	69	8.6	12	0
Moore	7	82	11.7	28	2
Burns	7	62	8.9	14	0
Neufeld	3	41	13.7	25	0
Aiken	3	35	11.7	19	0
Bills	**293**	**3069**	**10.5**	**54t**	**11**
Opponents	**285**	**2938**	**10.3**	**77t**	**18**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Bledsoe	471	274	2860	11	12
T. Brown	18	14	160	0	1
Van Pelt	12	5	49	0	3
Henry	1	0	0	0	1
Bills	**502**	**293**	**3069**	**11**	**17**
Opponents	**508**	**285**	**2938**	**18**	**10**

SACKS

Schobel 11.5, Posey 5.5, Adams 5.0, Denney 3.5, Milloy 3.0, Fletcher 2.0, Spikes 2.0, McGee 1.0, Winfield 1.0, Wire 1.0, Edwards 0.5, Prioleau 0.5, K. Thomas 0.5

Bills 38.0, Opponents 51.0

t=touchdown

DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

Eric Moulds, WR

Secondary

Grade: B-

The Bills lost small and gritty Antoine Winfield and replaced him with lean, experienced Troy Vincent. Vincent is a wonderful person and a great technician but the Bills bought themselves a one-year fix, maybe two, in acquiring this 12-year veteran. Lawyer Milloy started fast and then didn't do much last season. Maybe he needs to play against New England every week. There's not much depth at the corner, and just a bit more at safety, where Coy Wire is too good a player to be seeing such limited time.

The whole group needs to get after the football more. Buffalo's 10 interceptions last season tied for 30th in the league, ahead of only Denver.

Special teams

Grade: C+

Punter Brian Moorman does not get his due. It isn't easy learning to handle the wind at home (as well as in New England and at the New York Jets). Moorman has a good leg and a good attitude about his job. You can't say the same for placekicker Rian Lindell, who really let the team down. He was three of nine on field goal tries from 40 yards and out. The Bills did a poor job on punt returns and need help if they're going to better their field position.

Management

Grade: B-

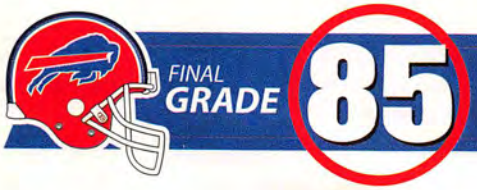
General Manager Tom Donahoe has not yet lived up to his reputation. Maybe with Mularkey, an offensive-minded coach, the club can generate some points, excitement and a playoff berth. Mularkey is well regarded but untested in this position. Give him big ups for bringing in such minds as Tom Clements and Sam Wyche on the offensive side. Donahoe traded a No. 1 pick for Bledsoe and spent one on McGahee. Just as Mularkey must produce, so must Donahoe.

Bottom line

The Bills have been unable to recapture the excitement of their glory years under Marv Levy. They've lacked the dynamism that players like Jim Kelly and Thurman Thomas provided. They continue to search for the quarterback of tomorrow.

The Bills should have had a better record last year. They exploded out of the gate and then crumbled, with veteran players (remember Ruben Brown?) hurting more than helping.

Mularkey brings a breath of fresh air and creativity that this team needs. It is a difficult time to be trying to build when the division is as strong as it is from the top down.



BILLS ROSTER

Mike Mularkey, head coach

Don Blackmon, linebackers; **Tom Clements** , off. coord.; **Jerry Gray,** def. coord.; **Bobby April,** special teams coord.; **Tim Krumrie,** def. line; **Chuck Lester,** def. asst.; **Jim McNally,** off. line; **Mike Miller,** tight ends/off. quality control; **Eric Studesville,** running backs; **Steve Szabo,** defensive backs; **Tyke Tolbert,** wide receivers; **Frank Verducci,** asst. off. line/tight ends; **Sam Wyche,** quarterbacks

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
11	Bledsoe, Drew	QB	6-5	238	2-14-1972	11	Washington State
5	Brown, Travis	QB	6-3	215	7-17-1977	3	Northern Arizona

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
54	Dorenbos, Jon	C	6-1	250	7-21-1980	1	UTEP
75	Jennings, Jonas	T	6-3	325	11-21-1977	3	Georgia
73	Price, Marcus	T	6-4	310	3-3-1972	6	LSU
61	Pucillo, Mike	G	6-4	311	7-14-1979	1	Auburn
75	Robertson, Bernard	T	6-3	315	6-9-1979	1	Tulane
73	Smith, Lawrence	T	6-3	295	8-16-1979	0	Tennessee State
64	Sobieski, Ben	T	6-5	315	5-3-1979	1	Iowa
74	Sullivan, Marques	T	6-5	325	2-2-1978	3	Illinois
70	Teague, Trey	C	6-5	300	12-27-1974	5	Tennessee
65	Tucker, Ross	G	6-4	316	3-2-1979	3	Princeton
58	Villarrial, Chris	G	6-3	318	6-9-1973	8	Indiana (PA)
68	Williams, Mike	T	6-6	370	1-11-1980	2	Texas

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
35	Burns, Joe	RB	5-9	215	9-15-1979	2	Georgia Tech
20	Henry, Travis	RB	5-9	215	10-29-1978	3	Tennessee
21	McGahee, Willis	RB	6-1	223	10-20-1981	0	Miami (FL)
31	Shelton, Daimon	RB	6-1	262	9-15-1972	6	Sacramento State
30	Simonton, Ken	RB	5-8	191	6-7-1979	1	Oregon State

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
89	Aiken, Sam	WR	6-2	204	12-14-1980	1	North Carolina
86	Brown, Antonio	WR	5-10	175	3-3-1978	1	West Virginia
84	Campbell, Mark	TE	6-6	255	12-6-1975	4	Michigan
85	Coleman, Clarence	WR	5-10	193	6-4-1980	1	Ferris State
80	Moulds, Eric	WR	6-2	210	7-17-1973	8	Mississippi State
88	Neufeld, Ryan	TE	6-4	250	11-22-1975	3	UCLA
82	Reed, Josh	WR	5-10	208	5-1-1980	2	LSU
81	Shaw, Bobby	WR	6-1	185	4-23-1975	5	California

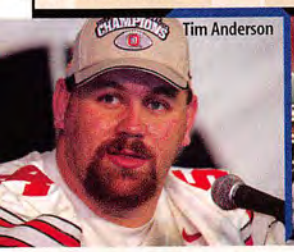
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
95	Adams, Sam	DT	6-4	335	6-13-1973	10	Texas A&M
97	Bannan, Justin	DT	6-3	305	4-18-1979	2	Colorado
92	Denney, Ryan	DE	6-7	275	6-15-1977	2	Brigham Young
98	Edwards, Ron	DT	6-3	320	7-12-1979	3	Texas A&M
99	Gibson, Oliver	DT	6-2	304	3-15-1972	9	Notre Dame
90	Kelsay, Chris	DE	6-4	275	10-31-1979	1	Nebraska
91	McKenzie, Keith	DE	6-3	267	10-17-1973	8	Ball State
66	Sape, Lauvale	DT	6-1	296	8-29-1980	1	Utah
94	Schobel, Aaron	DE	6-4	262	9-1-1977	3	Texas Christian
71	Seals, Richard	DT	6-3	305	3-18-1976	0	Utah
93	Williams, Pat	DT	6-3	315	10-24-1972	7	Texas A&M

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
22	Clements, Nate	CB	6-1	209	12-12-1979	3	Ohio State
24	McGee, Terrence	CB	5-9	195	10-14-1980	1	Northwestern State
36	Milloy, Lawyer	S	6-1	210	11-14-1973	8	Washington
23	Prioleau, Pierson	S	5-11	188	8-6-1977	5	Virginia Tech
43	Reese, Izell	S	6-2	195	5-7-1974	6	UAB
28	Thomas, Kevin	CB	6-1	182	7-28-1978	2	UNLV
	Vincent, Troy	CB	6-1	200	6-8-1971	12	Wisconsin
27	Wire, Coy	S	6-1	205	11-7-1978	2	Stanford

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
55	Crowell, Angelo	LB	6-1	235	8-16-1981	1	Virginia
59	Fletcher, London	LB	5-10	245	5-19-1975	6	John Carroll
53	Haggan, Mario	LB	6-3	248	3-3-1980	1	Mississippi State
96	Posey, Jeff	LB	6-4	241	8-14-1975	6	Southern Mississippi
51	Spikes, Takeo	LB	6-2	242	12-17-1976	6	Auburn
57	Stamer, Josh	LB	6-2	238	10-11-1977	1	South Dakota
50	Stevenson, Dominique	LB	6-1	235	12-28-1977	2	Tennessee

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
9	Lindell, Rian	K	6-3	235	1-20-1977	4	Washington State
8	Moorman, Brian	P	6-1	175	2-5-1976	3	Pittsburgh State

L TO R: ICON SMI; ANDY MANIS/AP WIDE WORLD



Tim Anderson

MIKE ALLEN

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Drew Bledsoe
FB	Daimon Shelton
RB	Travis Henry
LT	Marcus Price
LG	Marques Sullivan
C	Trey Teague
RG	Chris Villarrial
RT	Mike Williams
TE	Mark Campbell
WR	Lee Evans
WR	Eric Moulds

DEFENSE

LE	Ryan Denney
LT	Sam Adams
RT	Pat Williams
RE	Aaron Schobel
LLB	Jeff Posey
MLB	London Fletcher
RLB	Takeo Spikes
LCB	Troy Vincent
RCB	Nate Clements
SS	Lawyer Milloy
FS	Izell Reese

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Brian Moorman
K	Rian Lindell
PR	Nate Clements
KR	Antonio Brown

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	13	Evans, Lee	WR	5-10	197	3-11-81	Wisconsin
1	22	Losman, J.P.	QB	6-2	220	3-12-81	Tulane
3	11	Anderson, Tim	DT	6-3	304	11-22-80	Ohio State
4	13	Euhus, Tim	TE	6-4	247	10-2-80	Oregon State
7	6	McFarland, Dylan	T	6-6	290	7-11-80	Montana
7	13	Smith, Jonathan	RB	5-7	188	10-19-81	Washington State

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Jacksonville		
Sept. 12	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 2 @ Oakland		
Sept. 19	4:15	
	Score:	
WEEK 3 OPEN DATE		
WEEK 4 vs. New England		
Oct. 3	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 5 @ New York Jets		
Oct. 10	4:05	
	Score:	
WEEK 6 vs. Miami		
Oct. 17	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 7 @ Baltimore		
Oct. 24	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 8 vs. Arizona		
Oct. 31	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 9 vs. New York Jets		
Nov. 7	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 10 @ New England		
Nov. 14	8:30	
	Score:	
WEEK 11 vs. St. Louis		
Nov. 21	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 12 @ Seattle		
Nov. 28	4:15	
	Score:	
WEEK 13 @ Miami		
Dec. 5	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 14 vs. Cleveland		
Dec. 12	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 15 @ Cincinnati		
Dec. 19	1:00	
	Score:	
WEEK 16 @ San Francisco		
Dec. 26	4:05	
	Score:	
WEEK 17 vs. Pittsburgh		
Jan. 2	1:00	
	Score:	

All times Eastern

AFC EAST
AFC NORTH
AFC SOUTH
AFC WEST
NFC EAST
NFC NORTH
NFC SOUTH
NFC WEST

NEW YORK JETS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 4 2003 RECORD: 6-10

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **David Barrett, CB** (ARI)
- **Eric Barton, LB** (OAK)
- **Reggie Tongue, S** (SEA)
- **Toby Gowin, P** (DAL)
- **Justin McCareins, WR** (trade, TEN)

STADIUM FACTS

The Meadowlands

Capacity: **80,242** Turf: **Artificial**
Tickets: **516-560-8200**
Web site: **www.newyorkjets.com**

Avg. Attendance **77,782**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **96.9**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$62.20**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.75**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$6.25 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.50 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: The Jets are a combined 5-30 all time versus the Steelers, 49ers and Rams—three teams that New York is scheduled to face in 2004.

STAT: Curtis Martin has topped the 1,000-yard rushing mark in each of his nine NFL seasons, the second-longest streak to begin a career in league history behind Barry Sanders' 10.

LOOK IT UP: Chad Pennington connected with Randy Moss for 24 touchdowns in 1997 for Marshall University, the second-best season mark in Division I-A history from one passer to one receiver.

THE COUNT:
2 – TDs scored by Curtis Martin in '03, the lowest figure of his career.
69 – Penalties by the Jets in 2003, fewest in the NFL.
1-5 – Jets' record last season after losing the coin toss.

Jets hopeful Chad's body won't leave them hanging again

Health of Pennington, Martin will hold New York's keys to success

The 2003 campaign was the season that wasn't. The Jets got caught flat-footed by Washington's spring talent raids, lost Chad Pennington to a broken wrist in August and grew older and slower on defense as the year wore on. Coach Herman Edwards had a bit of an exchange with owner Woody Johnson that seemed to hang a cloud over his future but Edwards ultimately earned an extension.

The Jets are definitely a team in transition, but from what to what? They seem to have boundless potential when Pennington's under center and nearly none when he's not. Curtis Martin is showing the effects of nine consecutive 1,000-yard seasons. The defense needed almost a complete overhaul and a generous dose of speed.

Chad Pennington, QB

LIVIO SUAREZ/A.I.M.

Offensive line — Grade: B

This group underachieved last season and knows it can play better. The run blocking early in the season was middling and the pass protection tended to break down. In center Kevin Mawae the Jets have one of the game's best, while right tackle Kareem McKenzie is also approaching Pro Bowl status. He may be a year away from getting that sort of recognition but is a massive drive blocker who almost never draws a penalty flag. Left guard Brandon Moore could be another NFL Europe success story.

Quarterbacks — Grade: B

The Jets can go where Pennington takes them, primarily because he takes them to the end zone. When he was out and Vinny Testaverde was in, the Jets moved the ball up and down the field but could not score touchdowns. At press time, Testaverde was a potential salary-cap cut.

Pennington makes offensive coordinator Paul Hackett's system work. He emerged late in the '02 season to lead the Jets to the playoffs and sparked them somewhat last year when he returned early from a broken left wrist. Backup Brooks Bollinger should at least know the offense

by now. Former Canadian Football League star Ricky Ray will battle him for the No. 2 spot.

Running backs

Grade: B

Martin plugs along and gets less credit for it than almost any back in the NFL. Last year, however, he began to show the signs of wear brought on by those nine straight 1,000-yard seasons. One more such effort will tie him with Barry Sanders, one behind all-time leader Emmitt Smith. The Jets figure Martin has some mileage left in him. They thought twice about trading backup LaMont Jordan, but they have to be worried about Martin's red-zone production (two touchdowns). Fullback Jerald Sowell does a fine job of blocking and receiving.

Receivers

Grade: B-

The Jets traded for Justin McCareins, who should give them a substantial boost and a bit of a burst. Diminutive Santana Moss is also a home-run hitter, but he lacks size and the Jets worry about his durability. Wayne Chrebet should hold down the third-receiver spot as he battles back from post-concussion syndrome, but that's not a sure thing. Tight end Anthony Becht is OK but nothing special. McCareins could be the difference-maker.

Defensive line

Grade: B

Expectations will only be higher for defensive tackle Dewayne Robertson as he enters his second season. He needs to be in better shape and more of a penetrating force after developing a bit slowly as a touted rookie. Jason Ferguson is solid inside. If Shaun Ellis and John Abraham become a true one-two punch as pass rushers, the Jets can minimize some of their other shortcomings. Ellis comes off a 12.5-sack season, Abraham off an injury-shortened one. They should be potent if they both can stay healthy.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	309.4	19
Rushing	102.2	25
Passing	207.3	13
Scoring	283	23T
Punt Returns	11.1	10
Kick Returns	24.4	2
Red Zone TD %	47.5	19
Total Defense	332.4	21
Against Rush	143.4	28
Against Pass	189.1	10
Points Allowed	299	8
Interceptions	11	29
Sacks	35	6
Turnover Diff.	0	14T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
274	78	181	15

RED ZONE OFFENSE

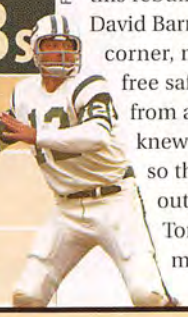
Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
40	178	19	16

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
8	20	1	0

JETS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **JOE NAMATH**
   Career Passing Yards: **27,663**
   Career TD Passes: **173**
2. **KEN O'BRIEN**
   Career Passing Yards: **25,094**
   Career TD Passes: **128**
3. **VINNY TESTAVERDE**
   Career Passing Yards: **40,932**
   Career TD Passes: **251**



FINALSHOT/JRP

Secondary

Grade: C+

When the linebackers got done with those nametags, they passed them to the secondary. Of the final-game starters, only cornerback Ray Mickens returns, and he's not a starter in this rebuilt unit. The Jets think free agent David Barrett, replacing Aaron Beasley at right corner, makes them better, and they like free safety Jon McGraw, who's returning from a recurring shoulder injury. They knew McGraw could use a veteran tutor, so they pursued John Lynch, just missed out on him, and settled for Reggie Tongue. Tongue is 31 and has some miles on him. Get acquainted, fellas.

Linebackers

Grade: B-

This group probably needed those little nametags that say "Hello, My Name Is ..." at the first minicamp. No Mo Lewis, no Marvin Jones—and no more timing the linebackers in the 40-yard dash with a calendar. Eric Barton steps in on the weakside, as Sam Cowart shifts into the middle. Victor Hobson is the leading candidate to play over the tight end. Barton was at least a red-chip player while with Oakland and is an upgrade. Hobson, entering his second year, has young legs and little experience. When the Jets go to a 3-4 look, rookie Jonathan Vilma will join Cowart as an inside man.

Jets hope to move on up to the west side of Manhattan with offseason charm offensive

While the Nets made a mid-winter announcement that they would be leaving New Jersey for Brooklyn, the Jets spent their offseason working toward their own formal announcement: that they were formally moving ahead with a plan to move from New Jersey to the far west side of Manhattan.

Having firmed up support from New York Gov. George Pataki and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, the Jets—who have agreed to pony up $800 million for a new stadium—spent the off-season behind closed doors working out the deals of the financial structure, according to Matthew Higgins, the team's vice president for strategic planning. (In the complex world of New York politics, the land is owned by the state-run Mass Transit Authority, but the city—which hopes to use the stadium for the 2012 Olympic bid—is actually pushing to fund a subway extension to the site.)

Jay Cross, N.Y. Jets president

While Higgins was confident at press time that a formal, late-spring announcement would be followed by a timeline and then a spring 2005 groundbreaking, the team is also aware of the opposition to the plans. There has been everything from concern to outrage voiced by community activists and the influential local media among others. Given those concerns, along with potential complications caused by city-state feuding, the team embarked on an ambitious charm initiative.

In one week in mid-March, the team ran a community event featuring current players, had a local politician release a favorable report, hosted a breakfast for 500 business leaders, and held a labor rally to show support from local unions.

"That's just the beginning," Higgins says. "Every week has different events."

Higgins believes the formal agreement will shift the foes' dialogue from stopping the Jets to "making it the best project it can be" from their viewpoint. While Higgins says there is room for compromise on details of the plan, the Jets insist that the west Manhattan site is the only "workable" possibility because the economics of the stadium would not work out in Queens.

"There is no Plan B," he says.

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 6, Lost 10

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/04	L	16-13	at Washington
09/14	L	21-10	Miami
09/21	L	23-16	at New England
09/28	L	17-6	Dallas
10/12	W	30-3	Buffalo
10/19	W	19-14	at Houston
10/26	L	24-17	at Philadelphia
11/02	L	31-28 (OT)	New York Giants
11/09	W	27-24 (OT)	at Oakland
11/16	L	38-31	at Indianapolis
11/23	W	13-10	Jacksonville
12/01	W	24-17	Tennessee
12/07	L	17-6	at Buffalo
12/14	W	6-0	Pittsburgh
12/20	L	21-16	New England
12/28	L	23-21	at Miami

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
C. Martin	323	1308	4.0	56	2
Jordan	46	190	4.1	39	4
Moss	10	67	6.7	25	0
Pennington	21	42	2.0	10t	2
Testaverde	6	17	2.8	13	0
Askew	2	9	4.5	6	0
Sowell	1	2	2.0	2	0
Jets	**409**	**1635**	**4.0**	**56**	**8**
Opponents	**542**	**2294**	**4.2**	**31t**	**17**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Moss	74	1105	14.9	65t	10
Sowell	47	436	9.3	44	1
Conway	46	640	13.9	45	2
C. Martin	42	262	6.2	29	0
Becht	40	356	8.9	29	4
Chrebet	27	289	10.7	29t	1
Baker	14	137	9.8	24	0
Jordan	11	101	9.2	25	0
Lockett	5	76	15.2	23	0
J. Carter	4	93	23.3	62t	1
Swayne	2	29	14.5	27t	1
Jets	**312**	**3524**	**11.3**	**65t**	**20**
Opponents	**281**	**3243**	**11.5**	**59t**	**14**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Pennington	297	189	2139	13	12
Testaverde	198	123	1385	7	2
Stryzinski	1	0	0	0	0
Jets	**496**	**312**	**3524**	**20**	**14**
Opponents	**455**	**281**	**3243**	**14**	**11**

SACKS

Ellis 12.5, J. Abraham 6.0, Ferguson 4.5, Cowart 2.0, Hobson 2.0, Robertson 1.5, Evans 1.0, McGlockton 1.0, Reed 1.0, Thomas 1.0, Garnes 0.5

Jets 35.0, Opponents 31.0

t=touchdown

TOM DIPACE

Shaun Ellis, DE

Special teams

Grade: B-

Doug Brien salvaged his career last season after the Jets lost John Hall. Four of his five missed field goal tries were from 50 yards or longer. The knock: short kickoffs.

Moss lends some real explosion on punt returns, but the Jets may want to limit his exposure here and make more use of him as a receiver. Toby Gowin for Dan Stryzinski is simply an exchange of journeyman punters. The coverage teams are fairly solid. If Jonathan Carter can stay healthy, he adds real speed on kickoff returns.

Management

Grade: B-

Somebody must be in charge here, but nobody makes the swift and decisive move. After its denuding last year in free agency, the club came back with a slow-motion search for a new defensive coordinator and couldn't even interview the top candidates before they took jobs elsewhere. Edwards seems to be evolving into a coach/GM and perhaps this ought to be more of a one-man operation. He's smart, capable and tough. He and GM Terry Bradway never seem to be on the same page. The Jets need a purpose and Edwards can give it to them. He'll put his stamp on the Jets—on the field and in the front office—this season.

Bottom line

The Jets suffered a setback last year when Pennington broke his left wrist. Pennington showed guts and character in hurrying himself back but he didn't seem quite ready to play. He'll be the central presence on an offense that seems to have upgraded his targets.

Defensively, the added speed and younger linebackers have to toughen this unit up against the run. There's some thought being given to a periodic 3-4 look. The Jets yielded 17 rushing touchdowns last season and need Robertson to be a penetrator. This could be a solid enough team to contend for a playoff berth in a rugged division if it can assimilate its new members.

NY FINAL GRADE 84

JETS ROSTER

Herman Edwards, head coach

Tim Berbenich, off. asst.; **Mike Canales,** wide receivers; **Denny Marcin,** def. line; **Bob Casullo,** tight ends; **Paul Hackett,** off. coord.; **Pep Hamilton,** off. quality control; **Bishop Harris,** running backs; **Jim Hostler,** wide receivers; **Dick Curl,** senior off. asst.-special projects; **Corwin Brown,** asst. special teams-asst. def. backs; **Doug Graber,** def. backs; **Donnie Henderson,** def. coord.; **Doug Marrone,** off.line; **Bob Sutton,** linebackers; **Nate Wainwright,** asst. coach; **Mike Westhoff,** special teams

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
5	Bollinger, Brooks	QB	6-1	205	11-15-1979	0	Wisconsin
10	Pennington, Chad	QB	6-3	225	6-26-1976	4	Marshall
	Ray, Ricky	QB	6-3	208	10-22-1979	0	Sacramento State
16	Testaverde, Vinny	QB	6-5	235	11-13-1963	17	Miami (FL)

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
75	Coleman, Reggie	T	6-5	310	10-4-1978	0	Tennessee
69	Fabini, Jason	T	6-7	304	8-25-1974	6	Cincinnati
78	Goodwin, Jonathan	G	6-3	318	12-2-1978	2	Michigan
68	Mawae, Kevin	C	6-4	289	1-23-1971	10	LSU
67	McKenzie, Kareem	T	6-6	327	5-24-1979	3	Penn State
65	Moore, Brandon	G	6-3	295	6-3-1980	1	Illinois
70	Nimmo, Lance	T	6-5	303	9-13-1979	0	West Virginia
74	Smith, Brent	G	6-5	305	11-21-1973	4	Mississippi State
64	Yovanovits, Dave	G	6-3	294	3-6-1981	0	Temple

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
35	Askew, B.J.	RB	6-3	233	8-19-1980	1	Michigan
34	Jordan, LaMont	RB	5-10	230	11-11-1978	3	Maryland
28	Martin, Curtis	RB	5-11	205	5-1-1973	9	Pittsburgh
	Reese, Jonathan	RB	6-1	220	4-15-1980	0	Columbia
33	Sowell, Jerald	RB	6-1	237	1-21-1974	7	Tulane

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
86	Baker, Chris	TE	6-3	258	11-18-1979	2	Michigan State
88	Becht, Anthony	TE	6-5	272	8-8-1977	4	West Virginia
84	Carter, Jonathan	WR	6-1	180	3-20-1979	3	Troy State
80	Chrebet, Wayne	WR	5-10	188	8-14-1973	9	Hofstra
85	Dearth, James	TE	6-4	270	1-22-1976	4	Tarleton State
49	Dominguez, Matt	TE	6-2	219	6-27-1978	1	Sam Houston State
87	Hamilton, Lawrence	WR	6-3	204	8-31-1980	1	Stephen F. Austin
	McCareins, Justin	WR	6-2	215	12-11-1978	3	Northern Illinois
19	Moore, Muneer	WR	6-1	200	3-15-1977	0	Richmond
83	Moss, Santana	WR	5-10	185	6-1-1979	3	Miami (FL)
18	Rambo, Ken-Yon	WR	6-1	195	10-4-1978	2	Ohio State
82	Swayne, Kevin	WR	6-1	191	1-17-1975	3	Wayne State (NE)

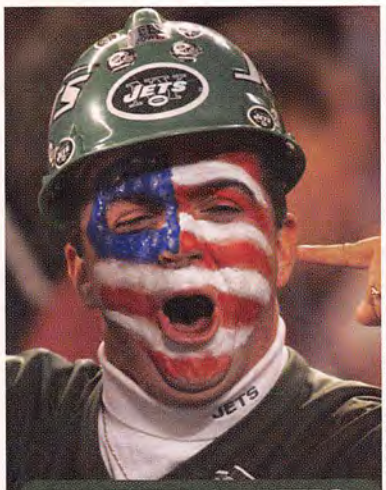
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
94	Abraham, John	DE	6-4	256	5-6-1978	4	South Carolina
91	Chevrier, Randy	DT	6-2	281	6-6-1976	1	McGill College
92	Ellis, Shaun	DE	6-5	294	6-24-1977	4	Tennessee
75	Evans, Joey	DE	6-5	280	8-22-1979	0	North Carolina
91	Evans, Josh	DT	6-3	280	9-6-1972	8	UAB
72	Ferguson, Jason	DT	6-3	305	11-28-1974	6	Georgia
98	Harper, Alan	DT	6-1	285	9-6-1979	0	Fresno State
93	Reed, James	DT	6-1	286	2-3-1977	3	Iowa State
63	Robertson, Dewayne	DT	6-1	317	10-16-1981	1	Kentucky
99	Thomas, Bryan	DE	6-4	266	6-7-1979	2	UAB
95	Walters, Matt	DE	6-5	272	8-22-1979	1	Miami (FL)

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
29	Abraham, Donnie	CB	5-10	192	10-8-1973	8	East Tennessee State
36	Barrett, David	CB	5-10	208	12-22-1977	4	Arkansas
23	Henderson, Jamie	CB	6-2	202	1-1-1979	3	Georgia
26	Lowe, Omare	CB	6-1	196	4-20-1978	2	Washington
38	McGraw, Jon	S	6-3	206	4-2-1979	2	Kansas State
24	Mickens, Ray	CB	5-8	180	1-4-1973	8	Texas A&M
25	Pagel, Derek	S	6-1	208	10-24-1979	1	Iowa
	Tongue, Reggie	S	6-1	204	4-11-1973	8	Oregon State

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Barton, Eric	LB	6-2	245	9-29-1977	5	Maryland
50	Brown, Mark	LB	6-1	238	5-19-1980	1	Auburn
56	Cowart, Sam	LB	6-2	245	2-26-1975	6	Florida State
58	Glenn, Jason	LB	6-1	231	8-20-1979	3	Texas A&M
54	Hobson, Victor	LB	6-1	252	2-3-1980	1	Michigan
51	Stewart, Quincy	LB	6-1	234	3-27-1978	3	Louisiana Tech
52	Wright, Kenyatta	LB	6-1	240	2-19-1978	3	Oklahoma State

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
6	Brien, Doug	K	6-1	180	11-24-1970	10	California
4	Gowin, Toby	P	5-10	167	3-30-1975	7	North Texas

BOB LEVERONE/TSN/ICON SMI



BOB FALCETT/ICON SMI

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Chad Pennington
FB	Jerald Sowell
RB	Curtis Martin
LT	Jason Fabini
LG	Brandon Moore
C	Kevin Mawae
RG	Brent Smith
RT	Kareem McKenzie
TE	Anthony Becht
WR	Santana Moss
WR	Justin McCareins

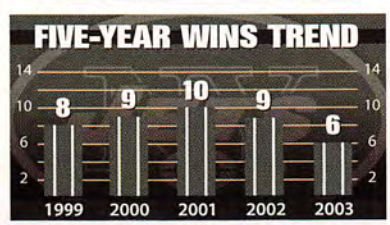
DEFENSE

LDE	Shaun Ellis
LDT	Dewayne Robertson
NT	Jason Ferguson
RDE	John Abraham
LLB	Victor Hobson
MLB	Sam Cowart
RLB	Eric Barton
LCB	Donnie Abraham
RCB	David Barrett
SS	Reggie Tongue
FS	Jon McGraw

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Toby Gowin
K	Doug Brien
PR	Santana Moss
KR	Jonathan Carter

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND



SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Cincinnati	
Sept. 12	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 2 @ San Diego	
Sept. 19	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 3 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 4 @ Miami	
Oct. 3	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 5 vs. Buffalo	
Oct. 10	4:05
Score:	
WEEK 6 vs. San Francisco	
Oct. 17	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 7 @ New England	
Oct. 24	4:05
Score:	
WEEK 8 vs. Miami	
Nov. 1	9:00
Score:	
WEEK 9 @ Buffalo	
Nov. 7	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 10 vs. Baltimore	
Nov. 14	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 11 @ Cleveland	
Nov. 21	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 12 @ Arizona	
Nov. 28	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 13 vs. Houston	
Dec. 5	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 14 @ Pittsburgh	
Dec. 12	4:05
Score:	
WEEK 15 vs. Seattle	
Dec. 19	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 16 vs. New England	
Dec. 26	4:05
Score:	
WEEK 17 @ St. Louis	
Jan. 2	1:00
Score:	

All times Eastern

AFC EAST
AFC NORTH
AFC SOUTH
AFC WEST
NFC EAST
NFC NORTH
NFC SOUTH
NFC WEST

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	12	Vilma, Jonathan	LB	6-1	223	4-16-82	Miami (FL)
3	13	Strait, Derrick	CB	5-11	189	8-27-80	Oklahoma
4	12	Cotchery, Jerricho	WR	6-1	199	6-16-82	North Carolina St.
4	36	Jones, Adrian	T	6-4	296	6-10-81	Kansas
5	11	Coleman, Erik	S	5-10	200	5-6-82	Washington State
6	13	Cavka, Marko	T	6-7	294	4-8-81	Sacramento State
7	12	McClover, Darrell	LB	6-1	226	8-25-81	Miami (FL)
7	33	Johnson, Trevor	DE	6-4	260	2-26-81	Nebraska
7	34	Ward, Derrick	RB	5-11	233	8-30-80	Ottawa
7	35	Washington, Rashad	S	6-1	217	3-15-80	Kansas State

JOE ROBBINS; BACKGROUND: CHRIS BERNACCHI/SPORTPICS

Get ready for the next sign of the apocalypse: the Cincinnati Bengals will win a division title

By John McClain, Houston Chronicle

Art Modell's departure as an NFL owner whose teams in Cleveland and Baltimore compiled winning records in 28 of his 43 years coincides with the arrival of the Cincinnati Bengals as a legitimate playoff contender for the first time since . . . since . . . since . . .

Since Paul Brown, the Browns' coach Modell fired, was still alive.

Modell passes the reins in Baltimore to Steve Bisciotti, who assumes full command of the defending division champs. The Ravens may have a difficult time repeating unless they put up a roadblock for that juggernaut that is being constructed in Cincinnati.

If the Bengals' meteoric rise continues at such a blistering rate, they may have to bronze coach Marvin Lewis and place his statue at the front gate of Paul Brown Stadium so fans can pay homage to a 21st-century miracle worker.

In his first season, Lewis helped transform the lowly, but lovable, Bungles from everybody's doormat into a genuine playoff possibility. The Bengals' six-game improvement last season, from 2-14 in 2002 to 8-8, represented the most prolific leap in the NFL. If not for a late collapse in which they blew their last two games, the Bengals could have made the playoffs for the first time since 1990.

During a season in which Pittsburgh and Cleveland—playoff teams in 2002—took colossal steps in the wrong direction, the Bengals were ascending to what could be the division crown this year.

To take that next dramatic step, the Bengals have to catapult past the Baltimore Ravens, who finished 10-6 for the division's only winning record last season. Their quick exit from the playoffs—at home against Tennessee—showed the Ravens have shortcomings the Bengals might be able to overcome.

For the second year in a row, the Bengals and Ravens may be able to distance themselves from the Steelers and Browns, whose playoff plummet was stunning. The AFC North avoided a coaching change, despite being the only AFC division that had just one team with a winning record. If that dubious distinction doesn't improve this season, there could be changes in Cleveland, where the "dawgs" are howling for coach Butch Davis' scalp even though he got a

Division's Best

BIG-GAME PLAYER	RUSHER	RECEIVER	TACKLER	SPECIAL-TEAMS WARRIOR
Ray Lewis, MLB Baltimore	**Jamal Lewis, RB Baltimore**	**Chad Johnson, WR Cincinnati**	**Ray Lewis, LB Baltimore**	**Adalius Thomas, DE Baltimore**
The ultimate team leader on a terrific defense.	Coming off the second-best season in NFL history.	Big-time deep threat coming off 1,355-yard season.	A fierce hitter who's hard-nosed and intimidating.	Was forced to miss the Pro Bowl because of injury.

two-year extension, and Pittsburgh, where Bill Cowher is on the hot seat after winning four fewer games than in '02.

At Cleveland, former team president Carmen Policy resigned and returned to California, where he'll own a Napa Valley winery. With Policy out of the picture for the first time since the franchise was reborn in 1999, any blame—or credit, for that matter—can be placed squarely on the head coach's shoulders. Davis has total control and answers only to owner Randy Lerner, which means he's coaching under more pressure than at any time in his career.

Pittsburgh appears to be a team in transition that will struggle at some point while rookie quarterback Ben Roethlisberger, its top draft pick, suffers through the inevitable pitfalls that can overwhelm a rookie at his position.

1. CINCINNATI BENGALS

page 62

The best decision owner Mike Brown made since his father, the legendary Paul Brown, died in 1991 was to hire Marvin Lewis and step into the background. Brown wanted to put Lewis' face on a franchise that hadn't posted a winning season since 1990—the last year the Bengals reached the playoffs.

During a 12-year period, 1991-2002, four coaches compiled a humiliating record of 55-137, which was even worse than the Cardinals. No wonder Brown preferred to disappear. The Mike Brown dartboard was the most popular Christmas present in southern Ohio.

Improvements made under Lewis included losing eight games by 7.7 points compared to 14 the previous season by 15.5, scoring more points (346 to 279), allowing fewer points (384 to 456) and ranking higher in the three major offensive categories—yards (13th from 18th), rushing (13th from 21st) and passing (12th from 13th).

Interestingly, Lewis had earned his reputation as an outstanding defensive coach, but the Bengals dropped from 17th to 28th in defense, 22nd to a tie for 25th against the run and 13th to 24th against the pass. No wonder six of their first seven draft choices were defensive players.

2. BALTIMORE RAVENS

page 66

The Ravens couldn't give Modell a going-away present of a Super Bowl victory, but he's still got his XXXV ring for retirement. He had to be satisfied with a 10-6 record and a division title. Modell didn't leave Bisciotti a bare cupboard. The best thing Modell left behind was an outstanding front-office staff and excellent coaching staff.

Entering his sixth season as coach, Brian Billick can be as irritating as a rash, but he's an exceptional coach with an eye for talent. Billick is a former offensive coordinator who would love to throw the ball all over the field, but he has been gifted with a superior running game and defense. That's why the Ravens ranked first in rushing and third in defense last season.

The Ravens hitch their playoff wagon to Jamal Lewis—whose legal problems were a distraction in the offseason—to control the clock and keep the defense off the field. That formula has worked more wonders for Billick than most of the former defensive coordinators who are head coaches. That's why only three coaches—Bill Cowher, Jeff Fisher and Mike Shanahan—have more tenure with their current teams.

3. PITTSBURGH STEELERS

page 70

Cowher earned his reputation as one of the NFL's best coaches by relying on a powerful running game and a physical defense that intimidated opponents at Three Rivers Stadium. When the Steelers moved into their new Heinz Field, they relied more and more on the passing game—a finesse offense in Pittsburgh, for crying out loud—and their defense is no longer intimidating.

Since leading the NFL in rushing in 2001, the Steelers have plunged to ninth and 31st, respectively, the last two seasons. Pittsburgh ranking 31st in rushing is blasphemous. If the Steelers can't run, they can't win. If Cowher doesn't fix it, he'll get run right out of Heinz Field.

Owner Dan Rooney decided to get with the times and remove the padlock from his wallet. The idea was to tie up the best players with long-term contract extensions. No longer would the Steelers allow some of their better players to leave as free agents. But guess what? They tied up the wrong players. Now they have cap problems like every other team, which makes the rebuilding even more difficult.

4. CLEVELAND BROWNS

page 74

If Davis overhauled cars like he's overhauled the Browns, he couldn't make a living as a mechanic. In three seasons under Davis, the Browns are 21-28, with a playoff appearance in 2002. Last season's 5-11 record represented a gigantic step backward, but Davis still convinced owner Lerner to give him a two-year extension.

Davis wants the Browns to have an identity, but so far all they've got is an identity crisis. They underwent major changes in the offseason. Policy retired and Ron Wolf, the former Green Bay general manager hired by Policy as a consultant, resigned because Davis barely acknowledged his presence. Free-agent quarterback Jeff Garcia was signed to replace the double-headed monster of Tim Couch and Kelly Holcomb.

For the second offseason in a row, Davis changed a coordinator. In his three seasons with offensive coordinator Bruce Arians, the Browns never ranked higher than 23rd in offense and 20th in rushing. Receivers coach Terry Robiskie was promoted to fix a problem that runs tantamount to the Browns' proud tradition that says they have to run the ball to be effective in the wind, rain and snow that come off Lake Erie.

TEAMMATE	SENSE OF HUMOR	INTELLECT	SIDELINE STRATEGIST	FRONT-OFFICE EXECUTIVE
Jon Kitna, QB Cincinnati	**Kenard Lang, DE Cleveland**	**Alan Faneca, OL Pittsburgh**	**Brian Billick, head coach Baltimore**	**Ozzie Newsome Baltimore**
Threw 26 touchdown passes, got benched, never complained.	As soon as his career ends, he'll go straight to television.	One of NFL's top linemen moves effortlessly between guard and tackle.	He does a superb job of making the system fit the talent.	He won a Super Bowl, rebuilt and won a division title last season.

CINCINNATI BENGALS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 1 2003 RECORD: 8-8

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Patrick Johnson, WR** (WAS)
- **Nate Webster, LB** (TB)
- **Kim Herring, S** (STL)
- **Bobbie Williams, OG** (PHI)
- **Deltha O'Neal, CB** (trade, DEN)

STADIUM FACTS

Paul Brown Stadium

Capacity: **65,535** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **513-621-8383**
Web site: **www.bengals.com**

Avg. Attendance **59,936**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **91.7**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$47.28**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$2.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$4.25 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.25 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Carson Palmer was the first Heisman Trophy winner to be selected with the No. 1 overall pick in the NFL Draft since Vinny Testaverde was taken by Tampa Bay with the first pick in 1987.

STAT: Rudi Johnson became the first running back in Bengals history to record three games of 150 or more rushing yards in a single season.

LOOK IT UP: Cincinnati posted an 8-8 record in 2003, becoming just the third team (out of 17) in NFL history to go .500 or better after going 2-14 the previous season.

THE COUNT:
33 – Bengals' offensive drives of 10+ plays in 2003, tops in the NFL.
20:1 – Jon Kitna's TD/INT ratio in Cincinnati's eight wins last season.
18-4 – Bengals' record in their last 22 home season finales.

Reborn Bengals appear set to roar under second-year 'miracle worker' Marvin Lewis

But is Palmer ready to take QB reins?

For a team that got so close to the playoffs, the Bengals made a couple of significant changes that better pay off, or the offense could unravel. They traded disgruntled running back Corey Dillon to New England for a second-round draft choice.

In a move that was unfathomable to many around the league, they announced early in the offseason that starting quarterback Jon Kitna, who threw 26 touchdown passes, was being demoted and replaced by Carson Palmer, who didn't throw a pass as a rookie.

But running back and quarterback aren't the Bengals' biggest worries. Entering his second season, coach Marvin Lewis better have that defense fixed if he really does believe his team is ready to move up in stature and win the division title.

Because defense is Lewis' specialty, and they worked hard in the offseason to bolster that side of the ball, there's no reason the Bengals shouldn't allow fewer points for a third consecutive season—down from 28.5 per game in 2002 and 24.0 last season.

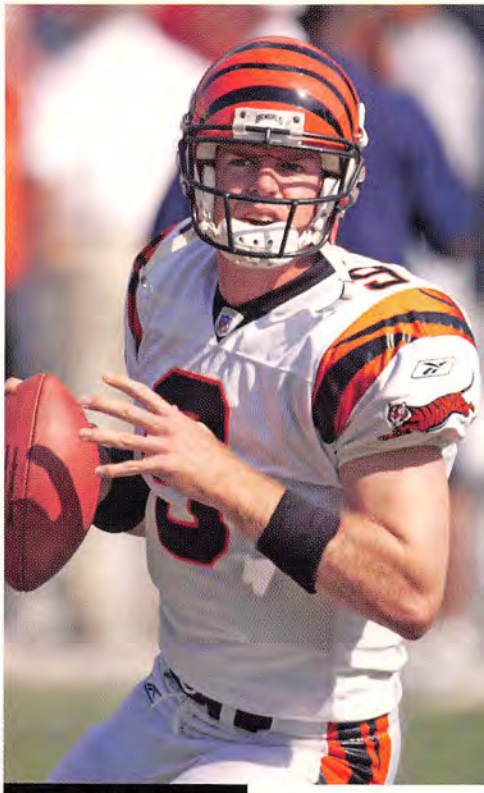
Offensive line — Grade: B+

The strength up front starts at tackle, where former No. 1 picks Willie Anderson and Levi Jones are the starters. Anderson is the best and most experienced, but Jones could become one of the league's best players on the left side. Together, they are formidable road-graders. Guard Eric Steinbach was a nice surprise as a rookie and should get better. Center Rich Braham is a solid veteran. Bobbie Williams is the new starter at right guard.

As a group, the Bengals are better run blockers than pass protectors, and that deficiency could be more pronounced with Palmer taking over as the quarterback.

Quarterbacks — Grade: B

Kitna could have gone screaming into the night and demanded to be traded after the way he was benched early in the offseason.



NORM HALL

Carson Palmer, QB

Even though he faltered down the stretch and didn't play well in the last two games, he still finished with 26 touchdowns, 3,591 yards, a 62.3 completion percentage, 15 interceptions and a passer rating of 87.4.

Palmer, the top pick overall in the 2003 draft, carried the clipboard and must be an extremely fast learner. He's got size, arm strength and mobility. Plus, he makes too much money to be a backup. If Palmer struggles early, will Lewis risk losing and taking steps backward for the good of his development, or will he send out an SOS for Kitna?

Running backs — Grade: B

No matter what Bengals fans think about the dearly departed Dillon, there's no denying his contributions, including six 1,000-yard seasons. When Dillon was injured last year, Rudi Johnson took advantage of his absence and provided the offense with 957 rushing yards, a 4.5-yard average per carry and nine touchdowns. What can he do for an encore? Rush for 1,300 to 1,500 yards, with the same kind of average per carry.

Still, eyebrows were raised when Lewis used his No. 1 draft choice on Michigan running back Chris Perry, who had been projected as a second-round pick. Should Johnson be looking

over his shoulder? Only at defensive players chasing him if he stays healthy. Not to be overlooked is the solid blocking of fullback Jeremi Johnson.

Receivers

Grade: A-

The running game could be emphasized more at the expense of the passing game because of Palmer's inexperience. If that happens, the biggest loser on offense could be receiver Chad Johnson, who had 90 catches for 1,355 yards and 10 touchdowns last season. Johnson has become one of the league's premier receivers because he and Kitna have developed the kind of rapport coaches covet. Johnson has emerged as a dangerous deep threat, and that part of his game could be enhanced because Palmer has a much stronger arm than Kitna and might be more prone to throwing down the field.

Peter Warrick has yet to become the kind of receiver scouts expected when he was a No. 1 pick. Although he caught 79 passes for 819 yards and seven touchdowns, the coaches expect more from a player so talented. His 10.4-yard average per catch was atrocious. The coaches have high hopes for Kelley Washington, who enters his second season. At 6-3, 218 pounds, he's a large target who's hungry for the ball.

Tight ends Reggie Kelly and Matt Schobel are better blockers than receivers. They combined for only 37 catches last season. The passing game is built around the wideouts, and that's a good thing.

Defensive line

Grade: C

All the problems on defense can't be traced to the linemen, but they do start up front. The Bengals allowed 4.8 yards per carry, ranking 30th in the league. They were 23rd with only 30 sacks. Improvement in both areas is a necessity.

Duane Clemons and Justin Smith, the starting ends, have to combine for more than 11 sacks. Outside pressure is paramount, but they also can't overlook the run. Tackle John Thornton may have been the Bengals' best overall lineman because he had six sacks and played better against the run. Tony Williams, the other tackle, is expected to be a run stopper who ties up two blockers.

Don't be surprised if a pair of fourth-round draft choices, tackle Matthias Askew and end Robert Geathers, get into the rotation and make a contribution.

Linebackers

Grade: C-

The Bengals got worse in this area when they allowed Takeo Spikes to go to Buffalo last year. Kevin Hardy, whose best days are behind him, couldn't take up the slack. Another free agent, Nate Webster, was brought in this year to start in the middle. The best of this group is Brian Simmons, a former No. 1 pick who has been inside and outside.

They have to do better against the run, and it won't hurt if someone other than Simmons manages to intercept a pass. Help could be on the way. The Bengals devoted two third-round picks on linebackers, Caleb Miller and Landon Johnson, both of whom will get a chance to contribute on the outside. In a perfect world, one will be good enough to unseat Hardy.

Secondary

Grade: C

Fans are witnessing a changing of the guard in this area. Gone are cornerbacks

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	333.1	13
Rushing	124.2	13
Passing	208.9	12
Scoring	346	13
Punt Returns	11.0	12
Kick Returns	19.9	27
Red Zone TD %	59.6	6
Total Defense	351.3	28
Against Rush	138.6	25T
Against Pass	212.6	24
Points Allowed	384	28
Interceptions	14	20T
Sacks	30	23
Turnover Diff.	+2	10T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
313	101	181	31

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
47	238	28	14

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
12	26	2	1

BENGALS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **KEN ANDERSON**
   Career Passing Yards: **32,838**
   Career TD Passes: **197**
2. **BOOMER ESIASON**
   Career Passing Yards: **37,920**
   Career TD Passes: **247**
3. **JEFF BLAKE**
   Career Passing Yards: **21,527**
   Career TD Passes: **132**

FINALSHOT/JRP

Rejuvenated Bengals work to make a hot item out of tix to Paul Brown Stadium

The Bengals are trying to capitalize on the rejuvenation their fans are feeling.

That's not a typo.

Despite faltering in their bid to make the playoffs or even to attain their first winning season since 1990, the Bengals' 2003 turnaround was so astonishing that their fans responded in record numbers. And now the team wants to keep them coming back for more.

"Our final game was on Dec. 28, and the next day we were out selling season tickets for 2004," Director of Ticket Sales Kevin Lane says. "We felt it was important to come out of the gate fast to take advantage of the excitement while it was there before the distractions of the playoffs."

After what seemed like a depressingly typical 2-14 season in 2002, the Bengals hired Baltimore Ravens defensive coordinator Marvin Lewis as their head coach. Lewis changed the team's mind-set and, as the Bengals began to win, that changed the fans' mind-set. In 2003, the club set a single-season attendance record of 479,488, shattering the previous mark of 422,000.

En route to finishing 8-8, the Bengals also broke their single-game attendance record three times, against Pittsburgh, Kansas City and, finally, when they lost the season finale 22-14 to in-state rival Cleveland in front of 65,362 cheering fans at Paul Brown Stadium.

The team had opened the new stadium in 2000 and watched attendance steadily decline—there were four sellouts in 2001 but just two in 2002—before last year's rebound, when there were five sellouts.

The Bengals are focusing on building up from their core, Lane says, beginning by calling people who attended games, hoping to get mini-plan holders to expand to season-ticket packages.

"Last year our season-ticket sales were about half of capacity but this year we hope to reach three-quarters capacity," he says.

Lane says the accelerated pace is paying dividends. By mid-February the team had 1,200 new season-ticket sales and by March it had surpassed its 2003 total for the entire year, months before any advertising campaign kicked in.

"It's safe to say there'll be more money for advertising," Lane says, though he wouldn't provide details.

Lane's staff spent the offseason emphasizing how quickly Carolina turned itself around and made a Super Bowl. If the Bengals can break their 13-year absence from the playoffs this season, then Lane's 2004-05 offseason will be even busier.

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 8, Lost 8

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	30-10	Denver
09/14	L	23-20	at Oakland
09/21	L	17-10	Pittsburgh
09/28	W	21-14	at Cleveland
10/05	L	22-16 (OT)	at Buffalo
10/19	W	34-26	Baltimore
10/26	W	27-24	Seattle
11/02	L	17-14	at Arizona
11/09	W	34-27	Houston
11/16	W	24-19	Kansas City
11/23	W	34-27	at San Diego
11/30	W	24-20	at Pittsburgh
12/07	L	31-13	at Baltimore
12/14	W	41-38	San Francisco
12/21	L	27-10	at St. Louis
12/28	L	22-14	Cleveland

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Ru. Johnson	215	957	4.5	54	9
Dillon	138	541	3.9	39	2
Bennett	56	173	3.1	19	0
Warrick	18	157	8.7	50	0
Kitna	38	113	3.0	15	0
J. Johnson	15	41	2.7	12	1
Washington	1	5	5.0	5	0
Bengals	**481**	**1987**	**4.1**	**54**	**12**
Opponents	**461**	**2218**	**4.8**	**78t**	**18**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
C. Johnson	90	1355	15.1	82t	10
Warrick	79	819	10.4	77t	7
Bennett	25	176	7.0	16	1
Schobel	24	332	13.8	45t	2
Washington	22	299	13.6	51t	4
Stewart	21	212	10.1	21	0
Ru. Johnson	21	146	7.0	17	0
J. Johnson	15	82	5.5	16	1
Kelly	13	81	6.2	13	1
Dillon	11	71	6.5	14	0
Walter	3	18	6.0	9	0
Bengals	**324**	**3591**	**11.1**	**82t**	**26**
Opponents	**297**	**3598**	**12.1**	**73t**	**23**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Kitna	520	324	3591	26	15
Bengals	**520**	**324**	**3591**	**26**	**15**
Opponents	**508**	**297**	**3598**	**23**	**14**

SACKS

Clemons 6.0, Thornton 6.0, J. Smith 5.0, Beckett 3.0, Williams 2.0, Hardy 1.5, Simmons 1.5, James 1.0, Kaesviharn 1.0, Roberts 1.0, Gibson 0.5, Powell 0.5, Roman 0.5, Steele 0.5

Bengals 30.0, Opponents 37.0

t=touchdown

ROB TRINGALI/SPORTSCHROME

Peter Warrick, WR

Artrell Hawkins and Jeff Burris and safety Mark Roman. For some reason, Lewis thinks Deltha O'Neal can play cornerback. Mike Shanahan was so disgusted with his former No. 1 pick in Denver that O'Neal was moved to receiver before being traded. Perhaps he will find that the grass truly is greener in Cincinnati, where he's supposed to start with Tory James. It's no secret that the defense needs help at cornerback, even though James was solid last season when he intercepted a team-leading four passes. If rookie Keiwan Ratliff, a second-round pick from Florida, is as good as the coaches believe, he can beat out O'Neal.

Veteran Kim Herring was signed as a free agent to start at free safety. Rogers Beckett is back at strong safety. Second-round pick Madieu Williams should get some playing time at safety.

Special teams

Grade: C-

There was nothing special about the Bengals' special teams, and this part of the team must be upgraded. The only change, though, is at kickoff returner, where receiver Patrick Johnson steps in to help improve a 19.9-yard average. Peter Warrick is a decent punt returner with a 10.9-yard average. Punt coverage was better than kickoff coverage.

Kicker Shayne Graham scored 106 points and missed only three field goals. Veteran punter Kyle Richardson was less than mediocre with a gross average of 40.0 yards and a net of 33.5. His specialty used to be putting the ball inside the 20, but he only did that nine times. His job is in jeopardy.

Management

Grade: C+

Executive Vice President Katie Blackburn, daughter of owner Mike Brown, helped convince her father that Lewis was the right man for the job. Once Lewis came on board, Brown stepped deep into the background. Still, he's involved in personnel decisions because that's his specialty. But Brown is leaving many of the decisions to Lewis, and the owner should be commended for it.

Bottom line

If the defense improves, which is a big "if" considering how much it needs from draft choices, and quarterback Palmer is as good as the coaches believe, the Bengals should win the division. But if the defense makes minimal improvement and Palmer suffers growing pains, they could plunge all the way down to the division basement.

BENGALS ROSTER

Marvin Lewis, head coach

Paul Alexander, asst. head coach-offensive line; **Jim Anderson**, running backs; **Bob Bratkowski**, offensive coord.; **Louie Cioffi**, asst. secondary; **Kevin Coyle**, defensive backs; **Leslie Frazier**, defensive coord.; **Jay Hayes**, defensive line; **Jonathan Hayes**, tight ends; **Ricky Hunley**, linebackers; **Darrin Simmons**, special teams; **Bob Surace**, offensive asst.; **Hue Jackson**, wide receivers; **Ken Zampese**, quarterbacks

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Kitna, Jon	QB	6-2	220	9-21-1972	7	Central Washington
9	Palmer, Carson	QB	6-5	230	12-27-1979	0	USC

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
71	Anderson, Willie	T	6-5	340	7-11-1975	8	Auburn
74	Braham, Rich	C	6-4	305	11-6-1970	9	West Virginia
76	Jones, Levi	T	6-5	310	8-24-1979	2	Arizona State
75	Kooistra, Scott	T	6-6	320	10-14-1980	1	North Carolina State
77	Leyva, Victor	G	6-4	307	12-18-1977	1	Arizona State
67	Mabry, Mike	C	6-1	295	4-26-1980	0	UCF
65	Steinbach, Eric	G	6-6	297	4-4-1980	1	Iowa
62	Sulfsted, Alex	T	6-3	320	12-21-1977	1	Miami (OH)
	Szalay, Thatcher	G	6-4	303	1-18-1979	0	Montana
66	Williams, Bobbie	G	6-3	320	9-25-1976	3	Arkansas

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
35	Goodman, Herbert	RB	5-11	205	8-31-1977	2	Graceland College
42	Hicks, Skip	RB	6-1	230	10-13-1974	4	UCLA
31	Johnson, Jeremi	RB	5-11	265	9-4-1980	1	Western Kentucky
32	Johnson, Rudi	RB	5-10	220	10-1-1979	3	Auburn
	Lynch, James	RB	5-11	276	6-17-1982	0	Maryland
33	Watson, Kenny	RB	5-11	214	3-13-1978	2	Penn State

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
84	Houshmandzadeh, T.J.	WR	6-1	197	9-26-1977	3	Oregon State
85	Johnson, Chad	WR	6-1	192	1-9-1978	3	Oregon State
	Johnson, Patrick	WR	5-10	196	8-10-1976	6	Oregon
82	Kelly, Reggie	TE	6-4	255	2-22-1977	5	Mississippi State
89	Schobel, Matt	TE	6-5	257	11-4-1978	2	Texas Christian
48	St. Louis, Brad	TE	6-3	247	8-19-1976	4	Southwest Missouri St.
86	Stewart, Tony	TE	6-5	260	8-9-1979	3	Penn State
83	Walter, Kevin	WR	6-3	221	8-4-1981	1	Eastern Michigan
80	Warrick, Peter	WR	5-11	192	6-19-1977	4	Florida State
87	Washington, Kelley	WR	6-3	218	8-21-1979	1	Tennessee

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
92	Clemons, Duane	DE	6-5	275	5-23-1974	8	California
95	Jackson, Ladairis	DE	6-2	260	6-16-1979	1	Oregon State
64	McCleary, Norris	DT	6-6	305	5-10-1977	2	East Carolina
60	Moore, Langston	DT	6-1	303	7-17-1981	0	South Carolina
98	Patterson, Elton	DE	6-2	271	6-13-1981	0	UCF
91	Powell, Carl	DE	6-2	285	1-4-1974	5	Louisville
93	Scott, Greg	DE	6-4	258	10-2-1979	1	Hampton
90	Smith, Justin	DE	6-4	270	9-30-1979	3	Missouri
97	Thornton, John	DT	6-3	297	10-2-1976	5	West Virginia
94	Williams, Tony	DT	6-2	296	7-9-1975	7	Memphis

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
45	Beckett, Rogers	S	6-2	207	1-31-1977	4	Marshall
20	Herring, Kim	S	6-1	200	9-10-1975	6	Penn State
26	James, Tory	CB	6-2	186	5-18-1973	7	LSU
35	Joseph, Ricot	CB	6-1	185	3-13-1980	1	UCF
34	Kaesviharn, Kevin	S	6-1	194	8-29-1976	3	Augustana (SD)
44	Manuel, Marquand	S	6-1	209	7-11-1979	2	Florida
37	Myles, Reggie	CB	5-11	185	10-10-1979	2	Alabama
24	O'Neal, Deltha	CB	5-10	196	1-30-1977	4	California
21	Porter, Alvin	CB	5-11	175	5-10-1977	3	Oklahoma State
30	Roberts, Terrell	CB	5-10	197	4-7-1981	1	Oregon State
23	Weathersby, Dennis	CB	6-1	204	6-16-1980	1	Oregon State

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
53	Abdullah, Khalid	LB	6-2	227	3-6-1979	1	Mars Hill
55	Chamberlin, Frank	LB	6-1	235	1-2-1978	4	Boston College
51	Hardy, Kevin	LB	6-4	259	7-24-1973	8	Illinois
52	Levels, Dwayne	LB	6-2	248	5-9-1979	1	Oklahoma State
57	Ross, Adrian	LB	6-2	245	2-19-1975	6	Colorado State
56	Simmons, Brian	LB	6-3	244	6-21-1975	6	North Carolina
	Webster, Nate	LB	6-1	230	11-29-1977	4	Miami (FL)

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Graham, Shayne	K	6-1	197	12-9-1977	3	Virginia Tech
10	Richardson, Kyle	P	6-2	210	3-2-1973	7	Arkansas State

DAVID KOHL/AP WIDE WORLD

CHRIS BERNACCHI/SPORTPICS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Carson Palmer
FB	Jeremi Johnson
RB	Rudi Johnson
LT	Levi Jones
LG	Eric Steinbach
C	Rich Braham
RG	Bobbie Williams
RT	Willie Anderson
TE	Reggie Kelly
WR	Chad Johnson
WR	Peter Warrick

DEFENSE

LE	Duane Clemons
LT	John Thornton
RT	Tony Williams
RE	Justin Smith
LLB	Kevin Hardy
MLB	Nate Webster
RLB	Brian Simmons
LCB	Deltha O'Neal
RCB	Tory James
SS	Rogers Beckett
FS	Kim Herring

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Kyle Richardson
K	Shayne Graham
PR	Peter Warrick
KR	Patrick Johnson

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	26	Perry, Chris	RB	6-1	224	12-27-81	Michigan
2	17	Ratliff, Keiwan	CB	5-10	187	4-19-81	Florida
2	24	Williams, Madieu	S	6-1	190	10-18-81	Maryland
3	17	Miller, Caleb	LB	6-3	225	9-3-80	Arkansas
3	33	Johnson, Landon	LB	6-1	223	3-13-81	Purdue
4	18	Askew, Matthias	DT	6-5	308	7-1-82	Michigan State
4	21	Geathers, Robert	DE	6-2	273	8-11-83	Georgia
4	27	Andrews, Stacy	T	6-5	346	6-2-81	Mississippi
5	17	Mann, Maurice	WR	6-1	191	9-14-82	Nevada
6	18	Brooks, Greg	CB	5-10	179	12-16-80	Southern Miss
7	17	Bramlet, Casey	QB	6-3	225	4-2-81	Wyoming

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ New York Jets	Sept. 12	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 2 vs. Miami	Sept. 19	8:30
	Score:	
WEEK 3 vs. Baltimore	Sept. 26	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 4 @ Pittsburgh	Oct. 3	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 5 OPEN DATE		
WEEK 6 @ Cleveland	Oct. 17	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 7 vs. Denver	Oct. 25	9:00
	Score:	
WEEK 8 @ Tennessee	Oct. 31	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 9 vs. Dallas	Nov. 7	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 10 @ Washington	Nov. 14	4:05
	Score:	
WEEK 11 vs. Pittsburgh	Nov. 21	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 12 vs. Cleveland	Nov. 28	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 13 @ Baltimore	Dec. 5	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 14 @ New England	Dec. 12	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 15 vs. Buffalo	Dec. 19	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 16 vs. New York Giants	Dec. 26	1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 17 @ Philadelphia	Jan. 2	1:00
	Score:	

All times Eastern

AFC EAST | AFC NORTH | AFC SOUTH | AFC WEST | NFC EAST | NFC NORTH | NFC SOUTH | NFC WEST

BALTIMORE RAVENS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 2 2003 RECORD: 10-6

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Kevin Johnson, WR** (trade, JAX)

He said it:

"I can get 15 interceptions. I'm about to set a bar. I'm about to show everybody what a safety really is. I'm going to check Ronnie Lott's numbers. Let's see what greatness really is."

—Ravens safety Ed Reed

STADIUM FACTS

M&T Bank Stadium

Capacity: **69,084** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **410-261-7283**
Web site: **www.ravenszone.net**

Avg. Attendance **69,579**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **100.7**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **53.03**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$25.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$4.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$7.00 / 24oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$5.00 / 32oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Former Ravens owner Art Modell and former NFL commissioner Pete Rozelle worked closely to create NFL Films. Modell was named the company's first chairman.

STAT: Baltimore's defense lived up to its billing in 2003, finishing first in sacks (47), second in forced fumbles (21), fourth in interceptions (24) and fifth in stuffs (67).

LOOK IT UP: The Ravens and Vikings set an NFL record with three kickoff returns for TDs, all in the first quarter of a game on Dec. 13, 1998.

THE COUNT:
6 – Fumbles lost by Jamal Lewis, tied for most among RBs in '03.
1 – TD drives spanning five or more minutes in 2003.
150 – Points scored in the fourth quarter, an NFL best last season.

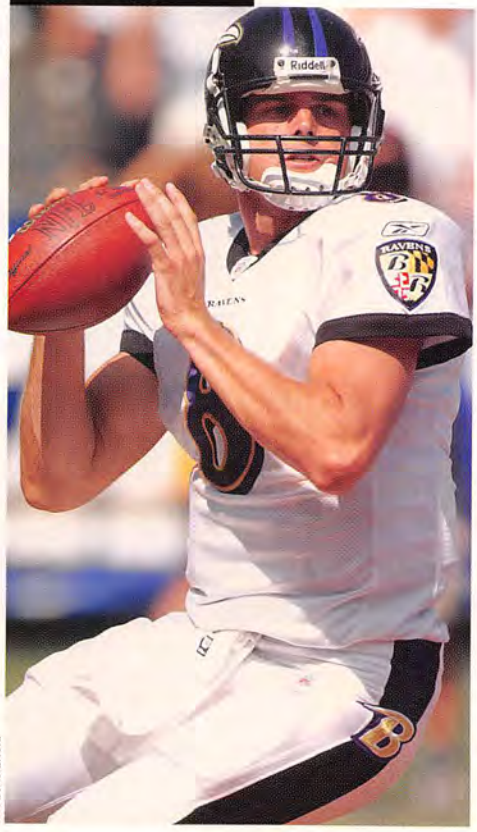
Defense is still dominant, but Ravens need a better passing game to equal last season's mark

Sophomore slump for promising QB Boller would sink Baltimore

At least the Art Modell era ended with a division title and a playoff appearance. The Steve Bisciotti era begins with Super Bowl aspirations. Now that he has complete control of the franchise, Bisciotti can learn from Modell's management style—he should stay out of the way and let his superb front-office team continue to run the personnel side of the organization.

Considering how pathetic the Ravens' passing game was last season, being able to recover from a 5-5 start to finish 10-6 and win the division title was nothing short of amazing. Coach Brian Billick had the NFL's worst passing game, so he tailored his offense around the magnificent running of Jamal Lewis, which is the mark of an outstanding coach. In an effort to improve the passing game under second-year quarterback Kyle Boller, Billick hired former Giants coach Jim Fassel as a senior consultant.

Kyle Boller, QB



PAUL JASIENSKI

Billick, General Manager Ozzie Newsome and Director of Player Personnel Phil Savage are as good as any threesome in the league. They tore down a Super Bowl champion with debilitating salary-cap problems, and they've rebuilt a Super Bowl contender without having to bottom out.

Offensive line — Grade: B

Starting with left tackle Jonathan Ogden, who is the best in the NFL at his position, and moving inside to guard Edwin Mulitalo and center Mike Flynn, the Ravens have a trio good as any. The right side of tackle Orlando Brown and guard Bennie Anderson isn't as formidable, but they still get the job done on run blocking.

As a group, the linemen are terrific run blockers. The Ravens ran a league-high 552 times, and their 4.8-yard average per carry was tied for third best. Allowing 42 sacks, despite throwing the fewest passes, is unacceptable, but much of that blame rests on the quarterbacks. Still, pass protection is an area that needs to improve.

Quarterbacks — Grade: C-

The Kyle Boller era began last season not with a bang but with a whimper. He got enough playing time to whet his appetite before being injured. The Ravens were last in passing. They attempted the fewest passes and completed the fewest. Their 52.3 completion percentage was 31st. They've only got one way to go.

Billick changes starting quarterbacks like others change socks, but he invested a No. 1 pick on Boller, who's smart and mobile with a cannon arm. They upgraded receiver for him. Anthony Wright, who replaced the injured Boller last season and played well, will be the backup. Rookie Josh Harris of Bowling Green is the developmental player at this position.

Running backs — Grade: A

Jamal Lewis' offseason legal problems received almost as much attention as his 2,066 yards rushing last season. Only Eric Dickerson has had a more prolific campaign. Lewis was as close to a one-man show as there was, and he was voted NFL Offensive Player of the Year.

His 5.3-yard average per carry was astounding for a back his size, but he showed consistent breakaway speed for the first time. What's even more stunning about Lewis' performance is that he did it without a passing game and facing eight-man fronts.

Chester Taylor and Musa Smith are looming in the background, but the only way they'll get on the field is if Lewis is injured or sidetracked in court. Not to be overlooked is fullback Alan Ricard, who helps clear a path for Lewis.

Receivers

Grade: C-

This position needed more attention than any during the offseason. Travis Taylor is the only returning wideout with more than 14 catches last season, and he had only 39. They traded for veteran Kevin Johnson, whose 58 catches for Cleveland were four more than the combined total of the Ravens' returning receivers.

They drafted three receivers—Devard Darling in the third round, Clarence Moore in the sixth and Derek Abney in the seventh. Darling could start as a rookie. He's got the kind of size and speed Boller will finding inviting. Moore is 6-5 and can still crack 4.6 in the 40.

Tight end Todd Heap, who led the team with 57 catches, has emerged as one of the NFL's three best at his position. He should be more effective this season with decent wideouts to attract some attention.

Defensive line

Grade: B-

In defensive coordinator Mike Nolan's 3-4 scheme, ends Anthony Weaver and Marques Douglas and nose tackle Kelly Gregg tie up blockers well enough to allow the linebackers to make tackles. They were sixth against the run, which helped them rank third in total defense. The starting linemen combined for 12.5 sacks, but that's not their specialty. The top draft choice was tackle Dwan Edwards, a second-rounder from Oregon State who'll play end in a three-man front. He didn't fill a need, but the Ravens' philosophy is to never pass up a quality defensive lineman in the draft. He could challenge for a starting job.

In passing situations in which they go to a four-man front, outside linebackers Terrell Suggs and Peter Boulware drop down and rush in space. They combined for 20.5 sacks.

Linebackers

Grade: A+

Terrell Suggs registered 12 sacks to become NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year. He replaced Boulware (8.5) as the team leader. Suggs is more of an end while Boulware is more of a linebacker who can also drop into coverage.

At one inside spot, of course, is Ray Lewis, the NFL Defensive Player of the Year. Lewis is the team leader who ignites the fire. He shuts down the run and plays the pass as well as any player at his position. The other starter on the inside, Ed Hartwell, is underrated because he plays in Lewis' immense shadow.

Rookie Roderick Green could get some playing time as an edge rusher.

Secondary

Grade: A

Cornerback Chris McAlister is coming off an exceptional season and continues to be a lockdown corner as good as any in the league. His counterpart, Gary Baxter, has played safety. He should improve as a corner.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	308.1	21
Rushing	166.8	1
Passing	141.3	32
Scoring	391	8
Punt Returns	7.7	24
Kick Returns	21.4	15
Red Zone TD %	42.0	29
Total Defense	271.3	3
Against Rush	96.0	6
Against Pass	175.3	4
Points Allowed	281	6
Interceptions	24	4T
Sacks	47	2
Turnover Diff.	+3	9

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
259	115	121	23

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
50	219	21	24

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
18	16	7	4

RAVENS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **VINNY TESTAVERDE**
   Career Passing Yards: **40,932**
   Career TD Passes: **251**
2. **TRENT DILFER**
   Career Passing Yards: **16,698**
   Career TD Passes: **94**
3. **ELVIS GRBAC**
   Career Passing Yards: **16,769**
   Career TD Passes: **99**

JOHN MCDONOUGH/SI/ICON SMI

Fassell to help nurture Boller as consultant

Dominating defense? Check.

Superstar running back? Check.

Coach with a Super Bowl ring? Check.

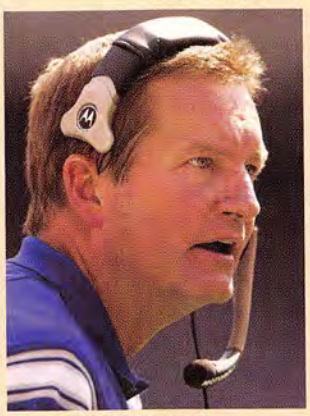
Top-flight aerial attack? Well, let's talk about that dominating defense.

The Baltimore Ravens' main goal this offseason was to find a way to strengthen their passing game.

"If we want to make a Super Bowl run, we need more efficiency in our passing game," says coach Brian Billick. "We were in the top 10 in (scoring) offense, but we were semi-one-dimensional last year."

The Ravens took a step in that direction by hiring former Giants head coach Jim Fassell to tutor second-year quarterback Kyle Boller. Boller impressed his teammates with his leadership last year, but his numbers were weak before he went down with a season-ending injury.

The Ravens—who had the youngest team in NFL history in 2002, then started Boller as a rookie last year—need a balanced attack more than an overhaul.



Jim Fassell

RICH KANE

The offense will not be totally revamped. It may feature some new schemes and plays, but Billick believes all that's necessary is for Boller "to blossom." That's where "senior consultant" Fassell comes in. While Billick still believes in offensive coordinator Matt Cavanagh and quarterback/receiver coach David Shaw, he says he has always wanted to work with his good friend Fassell, who helped nurture the likes of John Elway and Kerry Collins.

"He's one of the game's brightest offensive minds," Billick says. "He's the perfect person to help Kyle develop."

Billick, who says "until you've sat in this chair you don't know what the head coach's job is about," believes having his former Super Bowl rival will also make him better: "He's another set of eyes, another opinion—and he understands my perspective."

Billick's "perfect stat sheet" is a game with 35 running plays and 25 passes. Last year that would have meant about 13 completions from Boller. This year, Billick hopes it'll mean about 18.

"Look at it that way and it doesn't seem as far to go," Billick says. "I'm optimistic Kyle can take that next step."

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 10, Lost 6

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	34-15	at Pittsburgh
09/14	W	33-13	Cleveland
09/21	W	24-10	at San Diego
09/28	L	17-10	Kansas City
10/12	W	26-18	at Arizona
10/19	L	34-26	at Cincinnati
10/26	W	26-6	Denver
11/02	W	24-17	Jacksonville
11/09	L	33-22	at St. Louis
11/16	L	9-6 (OT)	at Miami
11/23	W	44-41 (OT)	Seattle
11/30	W	44-6	San Francisco
12/07	W	31-13	Cincinnati
12/14	L	20-12	at Oakland
12/21	W	35-0	at Cleveland
12/28	W	13-10 (OT)	Pittsburgh

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
J. Lewis	387	2066	5.3	82t	14
C. Taylor	63	276	4.4	32	2
Ricard	19	79	4.2	30	0
Wright	28	73	2.6	17	0
Boller	30	62	2.1	15	0
T. Taylor	11	62	5.6	16	0
M. Smith	9	31	3.4	11t	2
Heap	3	21	7.0	9	0
Redman	2	4	2.0	4	0
Ravens	**552**	**2674**	**4.8**	**82t**	**18**
Opponents	**448**	**1536**	**3.4**	**36**	**6**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Heap	57	693	12.2	33t	3
T. Taylor	39	632	16.2	73t	3
Robinson	31	451	14.5	50t	6
J. Lewis	26	205	7.9	26	0
C. Taylor	20	132	6.6	23	0
T. Jones	19	159	8.4	25	3
Sanders	14	170	12.1	44	0
Ricard	9	62	6.9	15	0
R. Johnson	1	12	12.0	12	0
Ogden	1	1	1.0	1t	1
Ravens	**217**	**2517**	**11.6**	**73t**	**16**
Opponents	**296**	**3158**	**10.7**	**82t**	**19**

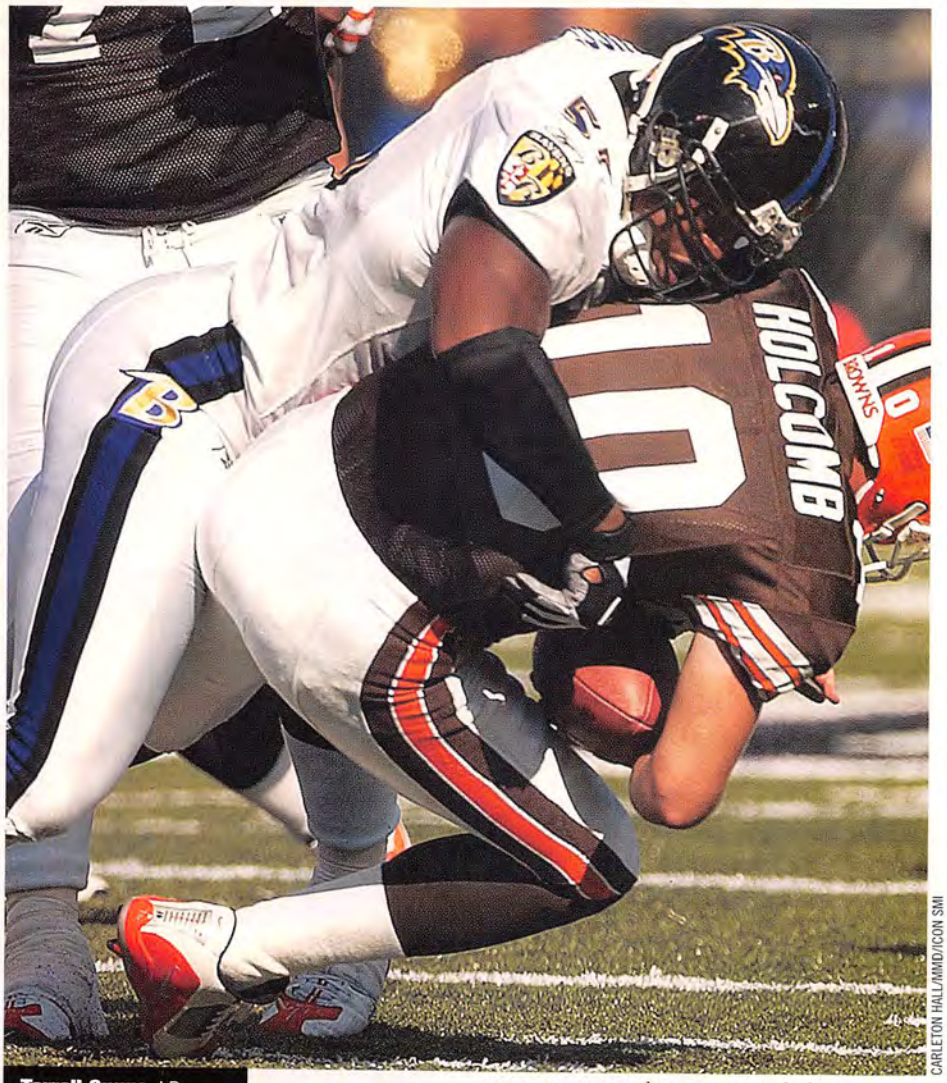
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Boller	224	116	1260	7	9
Wright	178	94	1199	9	8
Redman	13	7	58	0	2
Ravens	**415**	**217**	**2517**	**16**	**19**
Opponents	**531**	**296**	**3158**	**19**	**24**

SACKS

Suggs 12.0, Boulware 8.5, Weaver 5.0, Douglas 4.5, A. Thomas 4.0, Gregg 3.0, Hartwell 3.0, R. Lewis 1.5, Baxter 1.0, C. Brown 1.0, Kemoeatu 1.0, Reed 1.0, Slaughter LG 1.0, Williams 1.0, Knight 0.5

Ravens 47.0, Opponents 42.0

t=touchdown



CARLETON HALL/MMD/ICON SMI

Terrell Suggs, LB

The Ravens' starting corners have the kind of size coaches love.

Ed Reed is a big-play strong safety coming off a Pro Bowl season. Now that he's comfortable in the NFL, Reed makes plays all over the field because he's fast and isn't afraid to gamble. Free safety Will Demps should be looking over his shoulder because they'd like improvement at his position.

Special teams

Grade: B-

Kicker Matt Stover, 36, is like Old Man River—he keeps rolling along. He scored 134 points and proved again that he's just about as reliable as a kicker can get. He was perfect on 35 extra points. Of his five missed field goals, only three were inside the 50. He connected on all 22 attempts inside the 40.

Punter Dave Zastudil's goal is to put the ball inside the 20 because the Ravens' coaches don't think too many teams can drive more than 80 yards on their defense. He had 21 inside that mark last year.

Cornerback Lamont Brightful could be challenged for the return job by rookie receiver Abney of Kentucky. Kickoff returns were average and punt returns below average last season. The Ravens were better on punt coverage than kickoff coverage.

Management

Grade: A

Newsome, Savage and Billick know how to draft. Dating back to 1996, 10 of 11 No. 1 picks are still on the team, and seven have been to the Pro Bowl. They work well together, and they don't try to fit square pegs into round holes when it comes to their decisions.

Bottom line

Outstanding defense and sound special teams are taken for granted in Baltimore. If Boller improves in his second season, and the additions of Johnson and Darling at receiver pay off, the offense should be more balanced and less predictable.

Jamal Lewis might not get as many carries or yards as last season, but his powerful legs will still have a lot of explosion remaining at playoff time.

FINAL GRADE **87**

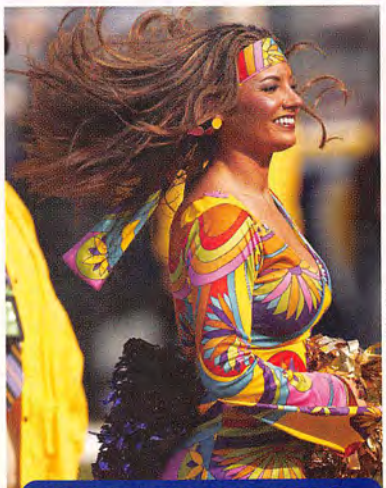
RAVENS ROSTER

Brian Billick, head coach

Matt Cavanaugh, off. coord.; **Jim Colletto**, off. line; **Mike Nolan** , def. coord.; **Jim Fassel**, senior consultant; **Jedd Fisch**, off. asst.; **Jeff FitzGerald**, outside linebackers; **Wade Harman**, TEs/asst. off. line; **Johnnie Lynn**, secondary; **Mike Pettine**, coaching asst./quality control; **Rex Ryan**, def. line; **David Shaw**, QBs/WRs; **Matt Simon**, RBs; **Mike Singletary**, LBs; **Bennie Thompson**, special teams asst.; **Dennis Thurman**, def. backs asst.; **Phil Zacharias**, LBs; **Gary Zauner**, special teams coord.

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
8	Boller, Kyle	QB	6-3	220	6-17-1981	1	California
2	Wright, Anthony	QB	6-1	211	2-14-1976	3	South Carolina
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
66	Anderson, Bennie	G	6-5	345	2-17-1977	3	Tennessee State
77	Brooks, Ethan	T	6-6	310	4-27-1972	5	Williams
78	Brown, Orlando	T	6-7	360	12-12-1970	7	South Carolina State
72	Cook, Damion	T	6-5	335	4-16-1979	2	Bethune-Cookman
62	Flynn, Mike	C	6-3	305	6-15-1974	6	Maine
59	Maese, Joe	C	6-1	241	12-2-1978	3	New Mexico
64	Mulitalo, Edwin	G	6-3	345	9-1-1974	5	Arizona
75	Ogden, Jonathan	T	6-9	340	7-31-1974	8	UCLA
79	Pashos, Tony	T	6-6	337	8-3-1980	0	Illinois
61	Rabach, Casey	G	6-4	301	9-24-1977	2	Wisconsin
43	Solwold, Mike	C	6-6	244	9-30-1977	2	Wisconsin
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
31	Lewis, Jamal	RB	5-11	240	8-29-1979	3	Tennessee
33	Morrow, Harold	RB	5-11	232	2-24-1973	8	Auburn
34	Mughelli, Ovie	RB	6-1	260	6-10-1980	1	Wake Forest
39	Ricard, Alan	RB	5-11	237	1-17-1977	3	Louisiana-Monroe
32	Smith, Musa	RB	6-1	232	5-31-1982	1	Georgia
29	Taylor, Chester	RB	5-11	213	9-22-1979	2	Toledo
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
86	Heap, Todd	TE	6-5	252	3-16-1980	3	Arizona State
84	Hunter, Javin	WR	5-11	190	5-9-1980	1	Notre Dame
	Johnson, Kevin	WR	5-11	195	7-15-1976	5	Syracuse
83	Johnson, Ron	WR	6-2	225	5-23-1980	2	Minnesota
82	Jones, Terry	TE	6-3	265	12-3-1979	2	Alabama
44	Smith, Trent	TE	6-5	243	9-15-1979	0	Oklahoma
89	Taylor, Travis	WR	6-1	200	3-30-1978	4	Florida
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
94	Douglas, Marques	DE	6-2	280	3-5-1977	4	Howard
69	Franklin, Aubrayo	DT	6-1	320	8-27-1980	1	Tennessee
97	Gregg, Kelly	DT	6-1	310	11-1-1976	4	Oklahoma
76	Johnson, Jarret	DE	6-3	285	8-14-1981	1	Alabama
92	Kemoeatu, Maake	DT	6-5	335	1-10-1979	2	Utah
96	Thomas, Adalius	DE	6-2	270	8-18-1977	4	Southern Mississippi
98	Weaver, Anthony	DE	6-3	290	7-28-1980	2	Notre Dame
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
28	Baxter, Gary	CB	6-2	204	11-24-1978	3	Baylor
45	Brightful, Lamont	CB	5-10	160	1-29-1979	2	Eastern Washington
47	Demps, Will	S	6-1	205	11-7-1979	2	San Diego State
26	Fuller, Corey	CB	5-10	220	5-1-1971	9	Florida State
21	McAlister, Chris	CB	6-1	206	6-14-1977	5	Arizona
20	Reed, Ed	S	5-11	200	9-11-1978	2	Miami (FL)
27	Sapp, Gerome	S	6-1	216	2-8-1981	1	Notre Dame
38	Walls, Raymond	CB	5-10	188	7-24-1979	3	Southern Mississippi
49	Williams, Chad	S	5-9	207	1-22-1979	2	Southern Mississippi
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
58	Boulware, Peter	LB	6-4	255	12-18-1974	7	Florida State
90	Brown, Cornell	LB	6-1	240	3-15-1975	6	Virginia Tech
93	Harrison, James	LB	6-1	242	5-4-1978	1	Kent State
56	Hartwell, Edgerton	LB	6-1	250	5-27-1978	3	Western Illinois
52	Lewis, Ray	LB	6-1	245	5-15-1975	8	Miami (FL)
57	Scott, Bart	LB	6-2	235	8-18-1980	2	Southern Illinois
53	Slaughter, T.J.	LB	6-1	234	2-20-1977	4	Southern Mississippi
55	Suggs, Terrell	LB	6-3	260	10-11-1982	1	Arizona State
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
9	Richey, Wade	K	6-3	205	5-19-1976	6	LSU
3	Stover, Matt	K	5-11	178	1-27-1968	13	Louisiana Tech
15	Zastudil, Dave	P	6-3	210	10-26-1978	2	Ohio

ROBERT E. HUDSON JR./ICON SMI



CARLETON HALL/MMDI/ICON SMI

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Kyle Boller
FB	Alan Ricard
RB	Jamal Lewis
LT	Jonathan Ogden
LG	Edwin Mulitalo
C	Mike Flynn
RG	Bennie Anderson
RT	Orlando Brown
TE	Todd Heap
WR	Kevin Johnson
WR	Travis Taylor

DEFENSE

LE	Anthony Weaver
NT	Kelly Gregg
RE	Marques Douglas
LLB	Terrell Suggs
ILB	Ed Hartwell
ILB	Ray Lewis
RLB	Peter Boulware
LCB	Chris McAlister
RCB	Gary Baxter
SS	Ed Reed
FS	Will Demps

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Dave Zastudil
K	Matt Stover
PR	Lamont Brightful
KR	Derek Abney

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ Cleveland	
Sept. 12	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 2 vs. Pittsburgh	
Sept. 19	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 3 @ Cincinnati	
Sept. 26	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 4 vs. Kansas City	
Oct. 4	9:00
Score:	
WEEK 5 @ Washington	
Oct. 10	8:30
Score:	
WEEK 6 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 7 vs. Buffalo	
Oct. 24	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 8 @ Philadelphia	
Oct. 31	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 9 vs. Cleveland	
Nov. 7	8:30
Score:	
WEEK 10 @ New York Jets	
Nov. 14	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 11 vs. Dallas	
Nov. 21	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 12 @ New England	
Nov. 28	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 13 vs. Cincinnati	
Dec. 5	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 14 vs. New York Giants	
Dec. 12	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 15 @ Indianapolis	
Dec. 19	8:30
Score:	
WEEK 16 @ Pittsburgh	
Dec. 26	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 17 vs. Miami	
Jan. 2	1:00
Score:	

All times Eastern

AFC EAST | AFC NORTH | AFC SOUTH | AFC WEST | NFC EAST | NFC NORTH | NFC SOUTH | NFC WEST

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
2	19	Edwards, Dwan	DT	6-2	309	5-16-81	Oregon State
3	19	Darling, Devard	WR	6-1	213	4-16-82	Washington State
5	21	Green, Roderick	LB	6-2	243	4-26-82	Central Mo. St.
6	22	Harris, Josh	QB	6-1	238	9-9-82	Bowling Green
6	34	Moore, Clarence	WR	6-5	211	9-24-82	Northern Arizona
7	43	Abney, Derek	WR	5-9	171	12-19-80	Kentucky
7	45	Rimpf, Brian	T	6-5	319	2-11-81	East Carolina

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 3 2003 RECORD: 6-10

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Chris Gardocki, P** (CLE)
- **Travis Kirschke, DT** (SF)
- **Duce Staley, RB** (PHI)

STADIUM FACTS

Heinz Field

Capacity: **64,450** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **412-323-1200**
Web site: **www.steelers.com**

Avg. Attendance **59,698**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **92.8**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$54.55**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$20.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$2.25**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$3.75 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.50 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: The Steelers won a coin toss with the Chicago Bears for the rights to the first overall pick in the 1970 draft. Pittsburgh selected Hall-of-Fame quarterback Terry Bradshaw.

STAT: After leading the AFC in sacks in 2001 (55) and 2002 (50), Pittsburgh recorded just 35 last season, the team's lowest total since 1990.

LOOK IT UP: Only eight head coaches in NFL history have served one team longer than Bill Cowher, who has been with the Steelers for 12 seasons.

THE COUNT:

25,624 – Steelers' rushing yards since 1992, most of any team.

542 – Punt-return yards for Antwaan Randle El in '03, second in the NFL.

77 – Rushing first downs last season, 31st in the league.

Cowher shakes up coaching staff, but will he pull plug on Maddox and roll dice with Roethlisberger?

Staley expected to stabilize rushing attack

The Steelers' regression from being one controversial call from the AFC Championship Game after the 2002 season to 6-10 in 2003 can be traced to a multitude of problems. But if one has to be singled out, it's the offensive line. Injuries and ineptness up front left the offense without the ability to run the ball consistently.

Coach Bill Cowher's modus operandi has been to run the ball, lead the league in time of possession and keep the defensive players fresh. That was a tried-and-true formula that blew up last season like a misguided chemistry experiment. Not only did the Steelers rank 31st in rushing—only Detroit was worse—but they ran for only 10 touchdowns, ranking 23rd. And their average time of possession (30:42) was 12th.

Revamping his coaching staff might be a good thing, especially with the addition of defensive coordinator Dick LeBeau, the former Cincinnati head coach. But no matter what kind of problems the Steelers believe they have in the secondary, at quarterback or in the offensive backfield, it's what's up front that still counts in Pittsburgh.

Hines Ward, WR

TOP TO BOTTOM: JASON COHN/ICON SMI; MICHAEL CONROY/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Offensive line

Grade: C+

The Steelers used to have the lightest, quickest and smartest linemen in the NFL. Now they've beefed up like every other team outside of Denver. Last season, they didn't block well enough for the running game, and they didn't protect quarterback Tommy Maddox efficiently. To improve, they need to stay healthy.

Guard Alan Faneca has become a perennial Pro Bowl selection, but he still might be the league's most underrated offensive lineman. When left tackle Marvel Smith was injured, Faneca made the switch and played exceptionally well. When Smith was healthy, the running game was more efficient.

Center Jeff Hartings and right guard Kendall Simmons are former No. 1 picks. Hartings has to play better. Simmons needs to become more consistent. Right tackle Oliver Ross, a former free agent, begins his second year as a starter.

Rookie Max Starks, at 6-7, 359 pounds, will need time to develop, but he's an impressive prospect who should eventually push Ross.

Quarterbacks

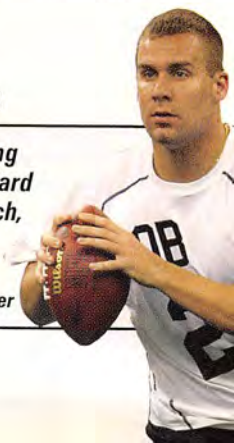
Grade: C

With two years of starting service, Maddox is just keeping the position warm for No. 1 pick Ben Roethlisberger. Maddox was awakened from his 2002 dream season to the real world

He said it:

"That's my knock, coming from the MAC. My standard response is Byron Leftwich, Chad Pennington and Randy Moss."

—rookie QB Ben Roethlisberger



last year when the Steelers ranked 22nd in offense, including 14th passing. Maddox, who was sacked 41 times, threw for 3,414 yards and 18 touchdowns compared to 17 interceptions. But he's a smart guy who can read the proverbial handwriting on the wall that says ROETHLISBERGER.

Big Ben is the first Pittsburgh quarterback to be drafted in the first round since Mark Malone in 1980. He'll need some time because he didn't play quarterback until his senior year of high school and left Miami of Ohio a year early. But he's Pittsburgh's kind of guy—a big, tough, blue-collar quarterback who's eager to learn and appreciates where he was drafted.

Running backs

Grade: C-

The Steelers' 3.3-yard average per carry tied Tennessee for worst in the league. Jerome Bettis seems about 42, is really just 32, but there are a lot of miles on this Bus. He rushed for a team-high 811 yards, but his longest carry was 21.

Veteran Duce Staley was pirated away from Philadelphia. He was limited to 463 yards last season, but he's healthy now, and he can catch, too. At 29, Staley is three years younger than Bettis and doesn't have near as much wear and tear on his tires. Bettis and Staley won't get around the corner, and they won't break long runs, but together they might be able to pound the ball between the tackles and control the clock the way the Steelers used to.

Receivers

Grade: B+

This is the strongest position on the team, but the more the Steelers have thrown the ball, the less effective they've been. Hines Ward, who is as tough as any receiver in the league, led the team with 95 catches for 1,163 yards and 10 touchdowns. Ward blocks like a fullback, and his toughness should be contagious.

Plaxico Burress was limited to 60 catches for 860 yards and four touchdowns. He was unhappy with his lack of production compared to the previous season when he had 1,325 yards. Antwaan Randle El remains one of the league's most versatile players from his slot position, where he had 37 receptions and 15 rushing attempts. He also completed three of four passes.

Tight end Jerame Tuman is a stout blocker but an afterthought in the passing game.

Defensive line

Grade: B

The three-man front remains intact for a fourth consecutive season. As a group, they do a good job against the run, including tying up blockers to allow the linebackers to make tackles. End Kimo von Oelhoffen is the best pass rusher. He led the team with eight sacks, which is highly unusual for a Steeler defensive lineman. Nose tackle Casey Hampton is adept at tying up two blockers. End Aaron Smith is solid all-around.

In passing situations, the outside linebackers play end in the four-man front. Last season, Jason Gildon and Joey Porter combined for 11 sacks, not nearly the kind of production this defense needs.

Linebackers

Grade: B-

The Steelers didn't get the kind of collective performance they needed from this four-some last season, and a change was made. For the first time in this decade, there's a new starter on the outside. Clark Haggans was

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	299.5	22
Rushing	93.0	31
Passing	206.5	14
Scoring	300	19
Punt Returns	12.2	5
Kick Returns	20.7	25
Red Zone TD %	45.5	23
Total Defense	298.9	9
Against Rush	108.5	12
Against Pass	190.4	11
Points Allowed	327	15T
Interceptions	14	20T
Sacks	34	12
Turnover Diff.	-3	21

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
275	77	174	24

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
44	183	20	14

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
10	19	4	2

STEELERS' BEST-EVER QBs

FINALSHOT/JRP

1. **TERRY BRADSHAW**
   Career Passing Yards: **27,989**
   Career TD Passes: **212**
2. **BOBBY LAYNE**
   Career Passing Yards: **26,768**
   Career TD Passes: **196**
3. **NEIL O'DONNELL**
   Career Passing Yards: **21,690**
   Career TD Passes: **120**

Cowher hopeful staff shakeup will shore up weaknesses

Bill Cowher wasn't planning such a busy offseason.

"At the end of the season I did not plan on making any changes," Cowher says.

Yet this ended up being the largest restructuring ever for the NFL's most senior head coach: five coaches from a 12-man staff are gone and the Steelers have new defensive and offensive coordinators, a new position (assistant head coach) and new coaches for quarterbacks, tight ends, defensive backs and wide receivers.

The first moves were born out of Cowher's conversations with his players, which led him to believe there were irreconcilable "philosophical differences" with defensive coordinator Tim Lewis and wide receivers coach Kenny Jackson. Cowher fired both. The next moves were born of necessity—offensive coordinator Mike Mularkey was hired to coach Buffalo and took quarterbacks coach Tom Clements as his offensive coordinator. Then defensive backs coach Willy Robinson left for San Francisco.

"Change can be good," Cowher says. "Unfortunately, I had too much time to do the hiring. Usually I'm in the playoffs."

Cowher emphasizes that what seems like a transformation actually offers plenty of continuity, or at least familiarity. There were promotions from within. Offensive line coach Russ Grimm adds "assistant head coach" to his title, while Ken Whisenhunt jumps to offensive coordinator from tight ends coach and former Steeler safety Darren Perry was promoted to replace Robinson as DB coach. The biggest hire, however, is Dick LeBeau, the former head coach in Cincinnati who ran the Steeler defense for Cowher in the mid-1990s. LeBeau was an assistant head coach in Buffalo last season under Gregg Williams, who was fired.

The other new faces are Bruce Arians as wide receiver coach, Mark Whipple (quarterbacks), James Daniel (tight ends) and Ray Horton (assistant defensive backs coach).

Cowher stresses that with Whisenhunt and LeBeau as coordinators the Steelers' foundation won't change. But blitz maven LeBeau promises more aggression for a unit that dipped to 35 sacks last year from 50 in 2002. On offense, Cowher says "I don't think there's any question we need to run the ball better."

The biggest challenge for the rest of this offseason is making sure "the boundaries are clearly defined and everyone understands their role" so on game day the decision-making goes smoothly, Cowher says, adding that he's sitting in on more coaches meetings than usual to lay that groundwork.

"A degree of energy comes with the newness," Cowher says. "It can be refreshing."

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 6, Lost 10

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	34-15	Baltimore
09/14	L	41-20	at Kansas City
09/21	W	17-10	at Cincinnati
09/28	L	30-13	Tennessee
10/05	L	33-13	Cleveland
10/12	L	17-14	at Denver
10/26	L	33-21	St. Louis
11/02	L	23-16	at Seattle
11/09	W	28-15	Arizona
11/17	L	30-14	at San Francisco
11/23	W	13-6	at Cleveland
11/30	L	24-20	Cincinnati
12/07	W	27-7	Oakland
12/14	L	6-0	at New York Jets
12/21	W	40-24	San Diego
12/28	L	13-10 (OT)	at Baltimore

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Bettis	246	811	3.3	21	7
Zereoue	132	433	3.3	22	2
Randle El	15	75	5.0	32	0
Haynes	20	63	3.2	15	0
Ward	11	61	5.5	25	0
Kreider	7	29	4.1	9	1
Maddox	13	12	0.9	6	0
Batch	1	11	11.0	11	0
Burress	1	-7	-7.0	-7	0
Steelers	**446**	**1488**	**3.3**	**32**	**10**
Opponents	**449**	**1741**	**3.9**	**78t**	**14**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Ward	95	1163	12.2	50	10
Burress	60	860	14.3	47	4
Zereoue	40	310	7.8	29	0
Randle El	37	364	9.8	32t	1
Doering	18	240	13.3	53	1
Bettis	13	86	6.6	16	0
Tuman	12	113	9.4	23	0
Riemersma	10	138	13.8	24	1
Kreider	9	107	11.9	26	0
Haynes	7	57	8.1	13	0
Mays	2	17	8.5	9	0
Bruener	2	12	6.0	11	1
Hope	1	81	81.0	81t	1
Steelers	**306**	**3548**	**11.6**	**81t**	**19**
Opponents	**294**	**3245**	**11.0**	**61t**	**20**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Maddox	519	298	3414	18	17
Batch	8	4	47	0	0
Randle El	4	3	6	0	0
Miller	1	1	81	1	0
Steelers	**532**	**306**	**3548**	**19**	**17**
Opponents	**484**	**294**	**3245**	**20**	**14**

SACKS

von Oelhoffen 8.0, Gildon 6.0, Bell 5.0, Porter 5.0, Bailey 2.0, Polamalu 2.0, A. Smith 2.0, Alexander 1.0, Haggans 1.0, Hampton 1.0, Logan 1.0, Townsend 1.0

Steelers 35.0, Opponents 42.0

t=touchdown

RICH KANE/ICON SMI

Kimo von Oelhoffen, DE

promoted to replace Jason Gildon, who has been a productive player for most of his 10 years in the league. Haggans starts opposite Joey Porter, who must return to Pro Bowl form against the run and pass.

The coaches expect Alonzo Jackson, a backup at both outside positions, to make significant improvement in his second season out of Florida State. They drafted him in the second round to become a ferocious pass rusher, and this would be an ideal time for him to prove them right.

Kendrell Bell and James Farrior return on the inside. Bell was third on the team with five sacks, and he's vicious against the run. Farrior plays in Bell's formidable shadow, and they need to turn it up a notch to become an elite twosome again.

Secondary

Grade: C-

Gone are cornerback Dewayne Washington and safety Brent Alexander, the latter of whom led the team with four interceptions. In their places are Deshea Townsend and Troy Polamalu, last year's No. 1 pick. When this year's second-round pick, Ricardo Colclough, matures enough to handle NFL receivers, they'd like to move the other corner, Chad Scott, to free safety. But that might take a season.

Scott, who has battled injury problems, and Townsend, who's 5-9 and ideally suit as a nickel corner, are going to be tested. Watch the hard-nosed Polamalu make a lot of progress in his second season. Free safety Mike Logan has seven years of experience, but he would be better off the bench.

Special teams

Grade: C

Randle El is a dangerous punt returner. He averaged 12 yards a return and scored two touchdowns. Cornerback Ike Taylor averaged 22.5 yards on kickoff returns, which was an improvement over Randle El's 19.4 clip. Overall, the Steelers' kickoff returns could be better, just like their kickoff coverage. Punt coverage was outstanding.

The Steelers stole Chris Gardocki from Cleveland to be their punter, and the Browns weren't sad to see him go. He had a 41.9 gross and a 34.8 net. He also had 10 touchbacks and only 18 kicks inside the 20. Kicker Jeff Reed missed two extra points and nine field goals, all inside the 50.

Management

Grade: B

Owner Dan Rooney oversees a sound organization. Cowher enters his 13th season, and he's been in his current job longer than any coach in the league. Cowher gets final say on personnel decisions, but he receives a lot of input from Director of Football Operations Kevin Colbert and College Scouting Coordinator Ron Hughes.

Bottom line

If the offensive line is more productive and consistent and they elect to stick with Maddox at quarterback over rookie Roethlisberger, they'll be a wild-card contender. Staley should improve the running game, and the secondary will be better as well. If they go with Roethlisberger, however, it means they've thrown in the towel on this season.

Steelers ROSTER

Bill Cowher, head coach

Russ Grimm, asst. head coach/off. line; **Dick LeBeau,** def. coord.; **Ken Whisenhunt,** off. coord.; **Bruce Arians,** WRs; **Keith Butler,** LBs; **James Daniel,** TEs; **Dick Hoak,** RBs; **Ray Horton,** asst. def. backs; **John Mitchell,** def. line; **Darren Perry,** def. backs; **Kevin Spencer,** special teams; **Mark Whipple,** quarterbacks; **Matt Raich,** quality control-offense; **Lou Spanos,** quality control-defense

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
16	Batch, Charlie	QB	6-2	220	12-5-1974	5	Eastern Michigan
8	Maddox, Tommy	QB	6-4	220	9-2-1971	7	UCLA
2	St. Pierre, Brian	QB	6-2	220	11-28-1979	0	Boston College

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
72	Brooks, Barrett	T	6-4	325	5-5-1972	7	Kansas State
66	Faneca, Alan	G	6-5	312	12-7-1976	6	LSU
71	Fordham, Todd	T	6-5	320	10-9-1973	6	Florida State
64	Hartings, Jeff	C	6-3	301	9-7-1972	8	Penn State
56	Okobi, Chukky	C	6-1	310	10-18-1978	3	Purdue
63	Pearce, Chance	C	6-2	246	5-11-1980	0	Texas A&M
79	Ross, Oliver	G	6-5	317	9-27-1974	4	Iowa State
54	Schneck, Mike	C	6-1	246	8-4-1977	5	Wisconsin
73	Simmons, Kendall	G	6-3	313	3-11-1979	2	Auburn
77	Smith, Marvel	T	6-5	310	8-6-1978	4	Arizona State
68	Vincent, Keydrick	G	6-5	330	4-13-1978	3	Mississippi

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
36	Bettis, Jerome	RB	5-11	252	2-16-1972	11	Notre Dame
46	Brown, Dante	RB	6-1	211	7-28-1980	0	Memphis
34	Haynes, Verron	RB	5-10	223	2-17-1979	2	Georgia
35	Kreider, Dan	RB	5-11	246	3-11-1977	4	New Hampshire
22	Staley, Duce	RB	5-11	220	2-27-1975	7	South Carolina
49	Wall, J.T.	RB	5-11	253	9-12-1979	0	Georgia

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Burress, Plaxico	WR	6-5	226	8-12-1977	4	Michigan State
48	Cushing, Matt	TE	6-4	255	7-2-1975	5	Illinois
83	Doering, Chris	WR	6-4	202	5-19-1973	5	Florida
89	Mays, Lee	WR	6-2	200	9-18-1978	2	UTEP
81	Milons, Freddie	WR	5-11	190	6-27-1980	0	Alabama
82	Randle El, Antwaan	WR	5-10	186	8-17-1979	2	Indiana
85	Riemersma, Jay	TE	6-5	255	5-17-1973	7	Michigan
84	Tuman, Jerame	TE	6-4	255	3-24-1976	5	Michigan
86	Ward, Hines	WR	6-1	205	3-8-1976	6	Georgia

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
98	Hampton, Casey	DT	6-1	320	9-3-1977	3	Texas
76	Hoke, Chris	DT	6-3	296	4-6-1976	0	Brigham Young
99	Keisel, Brett	DE	6-5	269	9-19-1978	1	Brigham Young
90	Kirschke, Travis	DT	6-3	292	9-6-1974	6	UCLA
91	Smith, Aaron	DE	6-5	300	4-9-1976	5	Northern Colorado
67	von Oelhoffen, Kimo	DE	6-4	300	1-30-1971	10	Boise State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
28	Fair, Terry	CB	5-9	184	7-20-1976	5	Tennessee
28	Hope, Chris	S	6-1	214	9-29-1980	2	Florida State
29	Iwuoma, Chidi	CB	5-8	184	2-19-1978	3	California
31	Logan, Mike	S	6-1	212	9-15-1974	7	West Virginia
43	Polamalu, Troy	S	5-10	213	4-19-1981	1	USC
30	Scott, Chad	CB	6-1	205	9-6-1974	6	Maryland
33	Stuvaints, Russell	S	6-1	195	8-28-1980	1	Youngstown State
24	Taylor, Ike	CB	6-1	195	5-5-1980	1	Louisiana-Lafayette
26	Townsend, Deshea	CB	5-9	191	9-8-1975	6	Alabama
25	Tucker, B.J.	CB	5-11	188	10-12-1980	0	Wisconsin

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
97	Bell, Kendrell	LB	6-1	254	7-2-1978	3	Georgia
51	Farrior, James	LB	6-2	242	1-6-1975	7	Virginia
50	Foote, Larry	LB	6-1	234	6-12-1980	2	Michigan
92	Gildon, Jason	LB	6-4	255	7-31-1972	10	Oklahoma State
53	Haggans, Clark	LB	6-3	251	1-10-1977	4	Colorado State
95	Jackson, Alonzo	LB	6-4	262	9-15-1980	1	Florida State
57	Kriewaldt, Clint	LB	6-1	242	3-17-1976	5	Wisconsin-Stevens Point
55	Porter, Joey	LB	6-2	250	3-22-1977	5	Colorado State

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Gardocki, Chris	P	6-1	200	2-7-1970	13	Clemson
6	Markham, John	K	6-1	212	4-27-1979	0	Vanderbilt
3	Reed, Jeff	K	5-11	226	4-9-1979	2	North Carolina

TOMASSO DEROSA

ROB BROWN/SPORTPICS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Tommy Maddox
FB	Dan Kreider
RB	Jerome Bettis
LT	Marvel Smith
LG	Alan Faneca
C	Jeff Hartings
RG	Kendall Simmons
RT	Oliver Ross
TE	Jerame Tuman
WR	Hines Ward
WR	Plaxico Burress

DEFENSE

LE	Aaron Smith
NT	Casey Hampton
RE	Kimo von Oelhoffen
LLB	Clark Haggans
ILB	James Farrior
ILB	Kendrell Bell
RLB	Joey Porter
LCB	Chad Scott
RCB	Deshea Townsend
SS	Troy Polamalu
FS	Mike Logan

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Chris Gardocki
K	Jeff Reed
PR	Antwaan Randle El
KR	Ike Taylor

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Oakland	
Sept. 12	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 2 @ Baltimore	
Sept. 19	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 3 @ Miami	
Sept. 26	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 4 vs. Cincinnati	
Oct. 3	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 5 vs. Cleveland	
Oct. 10	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 6 @ Dallas	
Oct. 17	4:15
Score:	

WEEK 7 OPEN DATE

WEEK 8 vs. New England	
Oct. 31	4:15
Score:	

WEEK 9 vs. Philadelphia	
Nov. 7	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 10 @ Cleveland	
Nov. 14	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 11 @ Cincinnati	
Nov. 21	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 12 vs. Washington	
Nov. 28	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 13 @ Jacksonville	
Dec. 5	8:30
Score:	

WEEK 14 vs. New York Jets	
Dec. 12	4:05
Score:	

WEEK 15 @ New York Giants	
Dec. 19	1:30
Score:	

WEEK 16 vs. Baltimore	
Dec. 26	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 17 @ Buffalo	
Jan. 2	1:00
Score:	

All times Eastern

AFC EAST | AFC NORTH | AFC SOUTH | AFC WEST | NFC EAST | NFC NORTH | NFC SOUTH | NFC WEST

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	11	Roethlisberger, Ben	QB	6-4	242	3-2-82	Miami (OH)
2	6	Colclough, Ricardo	CB	5-10	186	4-18-82	Tusculum
3	12	Starks, Max	T	6-7	359	1-10-82	Florida
5	13	Adibi, Nathaniel	DE	6-3	255	1-25-81	Virginia Tech
6	12	Lacy, Bo	T	6-4	294	11-22-80	Arkansas
6	29	Kranchick, Matt	TE	6-6	258	12-13-79	Penn State
6	32	Caylor, Drew	C	6-5	288	1-27-81	Stanford
7	11	Taylor, Eric	DT	6-2	302	12-14-81	Memphis

CLEVELAND BROWNS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 4 2003 RECORD: 5-11

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Ebenezer Ekuban, DE** (DAL)
- **Jeff Garcia, QB** (SF)
- **Terrelle Smith, FB** (NO)
- **Kelvin Garmon, OG** (SD)
- **Warrick Holdman, LB** (CHI)

STADIUM FACTS

Cleveland Browns Stadium

Capacity: **73,300** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **440-891-5050**
Web site: **www.clevelandbrowns.com**

Avg. Attendance **73,196**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **99.8**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$45.71**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.00 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.00 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: From 1996-2004, 56 players coached by Butch Davis at the University of Miami (Fla.) were selected in the NFL Draft, 23 in the first round.

STAT: Of the Browns' 49 games under coach Butch Davis, 28 have been decided in the final minute of play. Cleveland is 12-16 in those contests.

LOOK IT UP: Jim Marshall began his NFL career with Cleveland in 1960 and went on to play in an NFL-record 282 consecutive games for the Browns and Vikings.

THE COUNT:
13 – Passing plays of 25 yards or more in 2003, fewest in the NFL.
0-9 – Browns' record against teams with winning records last season.
700 – Rush yards by Jamal Lewis and LaDainian Tomlinson vs. Browns in '03.

With turbulent offseason behind them, Browns look to build offense around Garcia, Winslow

Weak line could stall progress as Davis enters fourth season

Few teams endured as much offseason controversy as the Browns. Offensive coordinator Bruce Arians was fired. They had to settle the Tim Couch situation. Couch wasn't the quarterback coach Butch Davis envisioned when he signed on in 2001. Backup Kelly Holcomb underwent shoulder surgery. Jeff Garcia was signed to be the starter.

Receiver Dennis Northcutt demanded to be traded to Baltimore, a division rival, and Davis almost fell over laughing. Suspended running back William Green was conspicuous by his absence. They traded up in the first round to get all-world tight end Kellen Winslow.

Winslow better help them get off to faster starts. The Browns had a nasty habit last season of trying to get out of holes created in the first half, when they were outscored 176-125. They outscored opponents in each of the third and fourth quarters, but it wasn't enough because they suffered eight losses by seven or fewer points.

Lee Suggs, RB

JOE ROBBINS

Offensive line — Grade: D+

The weakest area on the team didn't get an upgrade in the draft other than sixth-round tackle Kirk Chambers. Improving an offense that ranked 26th, including 20th in rushing and 25th in passing, falls on offensive coordinator Terry Robiskie, who was promoted from receivers coach.

After failing to trade up to draft tackle Robert Gallery, the Browns were left with the status quo. The problem is left tackle, where Ross Verba is recovering from a torn biceps tendon. Right tackle Ryan Tucker is solid. Right guard Kelvin Garmon was signed as a free agent and given a starting job. Left guard Enoch DeMar is nothing special. Center Jeff Faine, last year's No. 1 pick, should take a monster step forward if he can stay healthy.

Quarterbacks — Grade: B

Garcia didn't leave his heart in San Francisco; he brought it to Cleveland, where the fans will love him if he can stay healthy. Garcia thrives in the West Coast offense because he lacks arm strength and can't take the kind of pounding

Couch and Holcomb suffered last season when the Browns allowed 40 sacks. Garcia gets rid of the ball in a hurry, and he's usually on target.

Holcomb should be recovered from shoulder surgery. The former starter will back up Garcia. Holcomb has started so many games that the coaches don't lose sleep when he plays. Rookie Luke McCown, a fourth-round pick from Louisiana Tech, will be brought along slowly.

Running backs

Grade: C

Green's legal problems and suspensions opened the door for Lee Suggs, who burst onto the scene late in the season and flashed breakaway speed to the tune of 5.2 yards per carry. If Suggs stays healthy, he'll give them a dimension that's been missing—speed and the ability to score every time he touches the ball. Green and veteran James Jackson are backups, but Green's legal situation was up in the air at press time.

One reason the Browns were minus-11 in turnover ratio was their inability to hold the ball, including the quarterbacks. The Browns lost 18 fumbles, two off the league lead.

Fullback Terrelle Smith, acquired in the offseason, is a physical blocking back who can clear a path like a bulldozer. He's a better blocker than Aaron Shea, who's more of an H-back than lead blocker.

Receivers

Grade: B-

If you don't believe rookie tight end Kellen Winslow is all-world, just ask him. Or his father. They don't get much cockier than Winslow, but the kid can play. He can make catches all over the field, including deep down the middle or the sideline. And he's an underrated blocker.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	281.0	26
Rushing	104.4	20
Passing	177.1	25
Scoring	254	29
Punt Returns	8.2	20
Kick Returns	21.1	20
Red Zone TD %	45.2	24
Total Defense	309.9	15
Against Rush	132.1	23
Against Pass	177.9	7
Points Allowed	322	12
Interceptions	15	14T
Sacks	35	14
Turnover Diff.	-11	28T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
276	91	153	32

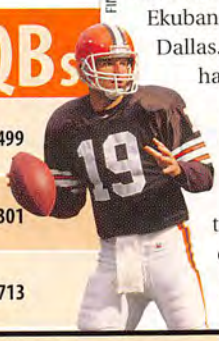
RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
42	176	19	15

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
8	17	2	1

BROWNS' BEST-EVER QBs



FINALSHOT/JRP

1. **OTTO GRAHAM**
   Career Passing Yards: **13,499**
   Career TD Passes: **88**
2. **BERNIE KOSAR**
   Career Passing Yards: **23,301**
   Career TD Passes: **124**
3. **BRIAN SIPE**
   Career Passing Yards: **23,713**
   Career TD Passes: **154**

Long before the Browns drafted Winslow, they hired his former college coach, Rob Chudzinski, to coach tight ends. Perhaps Chudzinski can keep Winslow's ego in check.

Neither Quincy Morgan nor Andre Davis, the starting receivers, had more than 40 catches, but that should change with Garcia at quarterback. Davis, who had 40 catches and five touchdowns, likes the ball down the field. Morgan is more of a possession receiver.

Defensive line

Grade: B

The Browns were 15th in defense, 23rd against the run, and they registered 35 sacks. Despite those numbers they have talent and depth up and down the line. If end Courtney Brown and tackle Gerard Warren, former No. 1 picks, can improve on their performances of last season when they combined for 11.5 sacks, the Browns could have one of the league's top-five lines. Brown has to stay healthy for the first time, and Warren has to penetrate and collapse the pocket.

End Kenard Lang, who led the team with eight sacks, is the ringleader to this group that includes veteran tackles Orpheus Roye and Michael Myers, both of whom are better against the run. The Browns added free-agent defensive end Ebenezer Ekuban, a former No. 1 pick who bombed out in Dallas. End Mark Word slipped to four sacks, half his output from the previous year.

Linebackers

Grade: C+

This area underwent an extreme makeover last season and, as a group, the linebackers should be even more effective this season. Middle linebacker Andra Davis is the leading tackler and

Davis believes he now has a winner at QB in Garcia

Most people would question anyone who chooses a career path that would take them from San Francisco to Cleveland.

But it was easy for Jeff Garcia to leave the redwood forests and the bay for a tough city hard off the shores of Lake Erie.

They stopped believing in Garcia in San Francisco and gave the starting QB job to Tim Rattay. That gave the Browns a chance to pick up the 34-year-old in free agency.

The age might have scared a lot of teams—especially since Garcia missed three games last November with an ankle injury—but not the Browns. However, a look beneath the surface reveals that they are the only games that Garcia has missed in the last four years. He returned from that injury to light it up in the final month of the season with 10 TD passes and four TD runs for the 'Niners.

That kind of production is exactly what Cleveland coach Butch Davis is hoping he'll get from Garcia this season. Davis admires the way Garcia has exhibited professionalism throughout his first five years in the NFL.

"The way he plays the game, the passion, the athleticism, the way he drove teams, his charisma are all his top characteristics," Davis says. "If you look at all the successes he's had, there was a common thread at every level of football—he's been a winner. They were 12-4 in San Francisco, he's been to a Grey Cup championship (in the CFL), he's been in the playoffs, he's been a Pro Bowl player."

Jeff Garcia

A three-time Pro Bowler, Garcia went 35-36 as a starter in San Francisco after arriving from the CFL in 1999. The Browns gave him a $5 million signing bonus, and he'll have a $500,000 salary in 2004. His salary in 2005 will be $4.5 million.

Garcia was very close to signing a free-agent deal with in Tampa Bay, where he would have competed with Brad Johnson for the QB job, but the opportunity to start for Cleveland made the decision easier.

"The difference was that the job is available and the organization treated me with respect and fairness," Garcia says. "They showed a real desire to have me here, a real belief that if I came here I would make a difference.

"If there's one thing I can bring to this game it's a lot of heart and dedication and so much perseverance."

—*Steve Silverman*

TOM RAUCH/COURSMI

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 5, Lost 11

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	9-6	Indianapolis
09/14	L	33-13	at Baltimore
09/21	W	13-12	at San Francisco
09/28	L	21-14	Cincinnati
10/05	W	33-13	at Pittsburgh
10/12	W	13-7	Oakland
10/19	L	26-20	San Diego
10/26	L	9-3	at New England
11/09	L	41-20	at Kansas City
11/16	W	44-6	Arizona
11/23	L	13-6	Pittsburgh
11/30	L	34-7	at Seattle
12/08	L	26-20	St. Louis
12/14	L	23-20 (OT)	at Denver
12/21	L	35-0	Baltimore
12/28	W	22-14	at Cincinnati

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Green	142	559	3.9	26	1
J. Jackson	102	382	3.7	18	3
Suggs	56	289	5.2	78t	2
White	70	266	3.8	23	1
Northcutt	12	83	6.9	23	0
Couch	11	39	3.5	17	1
Andre Davis	5	28	5.6	7	0
Dawson	1	14	14.0	14	0
Boyer	1	7	7.0	7	0
Holcomb	8	7	0.9	6	0
Faine	1	0	0.0	0	0
Browns	**412**	**1670**	**4.1**	**78t**	**8**
Opponents	**457**	**2113**	**4.6**	**82t**	**14**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Northcutt	62	729	11.8	44	2
White	46	303	6.6	22	1
Johnson	41	381	9.3	41	2
A. Davis	40	576	14.4	49	5
Morgan	38	516	13.6	71t	3
Heiden	18	134	7.4	17	0
D. Sanders	15	95	6.3	12	1
J. Jackson	14	114	8.1	18	0
Green	10	50	5.0	12	0
King	9	88	9.8	28	0
Heinrich	8	64	8.0	17	2
Mustard	4	29	7.3	12	0
F. Jackson	2	29	14.5	19	0
Shea	2	9	4.5	7	0
Suggs	2	0	0.0	1	0
Bowers	1	2	2.0	2t	1
Browns	**313**	**3116**	**10**	**71t**	**17**
Opponents	**297**	**3049**	**10.3**	**55t**	**13**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Holcomb	302	193	1797	10	12
Couch	203	120	1319	7	6
Browns	**509**	**313**	**3116**	**17**	**18**
Opponents	**502**	**297**	**3049**	**13**	**15**

SACKS

Lang 8.0, Brown 6.0, Warren 5.5, Andra Davis 5.0, Word 4.0, Myers 3.0, Roye 1.5, Rogers 1.0

Browns 35.0, Opponents 40.0

t=touchdown

NEWMAN LOWRANCE

Andra Davis, LB

recorded five sacks. If he continues to make progress, fans around the league are going to know his name.

Veteran Kevin Bentley at one outside spot and Chaun Thompson, last year's second-round pick, have to play better. Thompson can run faster than most safeties, but he's got to harness his energy and become more consistent. Overall, the linebackers have to do better against the run because the defense yielded 4.6 yards a carry last season. Barry Gardner, Brant Boyer and Warrick Holdman are experienced backups. Before Holdman blew out his knee in Chicago, he was on the verge of becoming a premier outside linebacker. If he regains that form, watch out.

Secondary

Grade: C

The Browns were seventh in pass defense. Cornerbacks Daylon McCutcheon, the last survivor from the Chris Palmer era, and Anthony Henry, who had 10 interceptions as a rookie in 2001, have combined to intercept only five passes over the last two seasons. They play the run well. Roosevelt Williams is the best backup corner.

Free safety Earl Little leads the team in interceptions each year, including six last season, four more than strong safety Robert Griffith. Little has range and reacts to the ball well. Griffith plays the run but has problems with man coverage. Watch second-round pick Sean Jones of Georgia get a lot of playing time at safety. Michael Jameson should be pushing Griffith, who is one of Butch Davis' favorites.

Special teams

Grade: D+

When your kicker leads the team with only 74 points, scoring is a problem. Phil Dawson's problem was a lack of opportunity. He attempted only 21 field goals and connected on 18, including two-for-two from 50-plus. Punter Chris Gardocki left as a free agent, and he has been replaced by Derrick Frost. Receiver Andre Davis averaged 21.1 yards on kickoff returns. He'll add punt returns to his list of duties. The Browns were average on kickoff returns and above average on punt returns.

Management

Grade: C-

With team president Carmen Policy retiring, Butch Davis has total control over everything involving the personnel side of the organization. So far, many of his acquisitions haven't panned out, but his two-year extension means he should be given ample time unless the Browns bomb out like last year. Davis wasn't interested in listening to Ron Wolf, who left his two-month job as a consultant. Davis' right-hand man, Vice President for Player Personnel Pete Garcia, influences the personnel decisions.

Bottom line

If Garcia can provide consistency and leadership at quarterback, if Suggs can take the next step at running back, if the offensive line can stay healthy and improve just a notch, and if the defensive line can remain intact for a season, the Browns might contend for a wild-card berth. But there may be too many "ifs." Then, it'll be back to the drawing board.

FINAL GRADE **82**

BROWNS ROSTER

Butch Davis, head coach

Terry Robiskie, off. coord.; **Dave Campo**, def. coord.; **Jerry Rosburg**, special teams coord.; **Phil Banko**, def. asst.; **Todd Bowles**, def. nickel package; **Rob Chudzinski**, TEs; **George Edwards**, LBs; **Fred Graves**, WRs; **Steve Hagan**, QBs; **Chuck Pagano**, def. backs; **Andre Patterson**, def. line; **Kennedy Pola**, RBs; **Mike Sullivan**, off. asst.; **Larry Zierlein**, off. line

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
5	Garcia, Jeff	QB	6-1	195	2-24-1970	5	San Jose State
10	Holcomb, Kelly	QB	6-2	212	7-9-1973	4	Middle Tennessee State
8	Husak, Todd	QB	6-3	215	7-6-1978	1	Stanford
	Hybl, Nate	QB	6-4	222	6-19-1979	0	Oklahoma

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
68	Beasley, Chad	T	6-5	300	11-13-1978	1	Virginia Tech
70	DeMar, Enoch	T	6-4	317	9-7-1980	1	Indiana
50	Faine, Jeff	C	6-3	303	4-6-1981	1	Notre Dame
67	Fowler, Melvin	G	6-3	310	3-31-1979	2	Maryland
63	Garmon, Kelvin	G	6-2	350	10-26-1976	3	Baylor
73	Gonzalez, Joaquin	T	6-5	310	9-7-1979	2	Miami (FL)
71	Osborne, Scot	G	6-4	298	10-30-1977	0	William & Mary
62	Osika, Craig	G	6-3	293	12-4-1979	2	Indiana
64	Pontbriand, Ryan	C	6-2	255	10-1-1979	1	Rice
72	Tucker, Ryan	T	6-6	325	6-12-1975	7	Texas Christian
77	Verba, Ross	G	6-4	308	10-31-1973	6	Iowa
66	Zukauskas, Paul	T	6-5	320	7-12-1979	3	Boston College

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
34	Bowers, R.J.	RB	6-1	250	2-10-1974	3	Grove City
31	Green, William	RB	6-1	215	12-17-1979	2	Boston College
29	Jackson, James	RB	5-10	215	8-4-1976	3	Miami (FL)
26	Maddox, Nick	RB	5-11	209	12-11-1980	1	Florida State
26	Reynolds, Joffrey	RB	5-10	221	11-26-1979	1	Houston
	Smith, Terrelle	RB	6-1	246	3-12-1978	4	Arizona State
44	Suggs, Lee	RB	6-1	205	8-11-1980	1	Virginia Tech

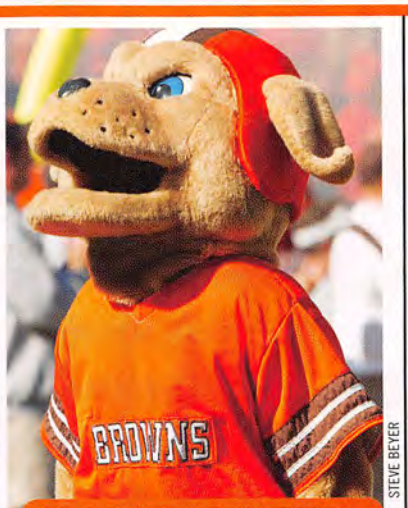
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
87	Davis, Andre	WR	6-1	195	6-12-1979	2	Virginia Tech
82	Heiden, Steve	TE	6-5	265	9-21-1976	5	South Dakota State
49	Heinrich, Keith	TE	6-5	255	3-19-1979	2	Sam Houston State
88	Jackson, Frisman	WR	6-3	215	6-12-1979	2	Western Illinois
85	Jones, C.J.	WR	5-11	192	9-20-1980	0	Iowa
84	King, Andre	WR	5-11	195	11-26-1973	3	Miami (FL)
48	Monroe, Rod	TE	6-5	265	7-30-1975	2	Cincinnati
81	Morgan, Quincy	WR	6-1	210	9-23-1977	3	Kansas State
83	Mustard, Chad	TE	6-6	288	10-8-1977	1	North Dakota
89	Sanders, Darnell	TE	6-6	270	3-16-1979	2	Ohio State
80	Shea, Aaron	TE	6-3	255	12-5-1976	4	Michigan

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
92	Brown, Courtney	DE	6-4	280	2-14-1978	4	Penn State
91	Claybrooks, Felipe	DE	6-5	275	1-22-1978	2	Georgia Tech
	Ekuban, Ebenezer	DE	6-3	265	5-29-1976	5	North Carolina
95	Garay, Antonio	DE	6-4	300	11-30-1979	1	Boston College
96	Lang, Kenard	DE	6-3	280	1-31-1975	7	Miami (FL)
97	McKinley, Alvin	DT	6-3	310	6-9-1978	4	Mississippi State
93	Myers, Michael	DT	6-2	292	1-20-1976	6	Alabama
61	Nix, John	DT	6-1	313	11-24-1976	2	Southern Mississippi
99	Roye, Orpheus	DT	6-4	320	1-21-1973	8	Florida State
93	Scott, Cedric	DE	6-5	290	10-19-1977	2	Southern Mississippi
94	Warren, Gerard	DT	6-4	325	7-25-1978	3	Florida
90	Word, Mark	DE	6-5	305	11-23-1975	3	Jacksonville State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
28	Bodden, Leigh	CB	6-1	195	9-24-1981	1	Duquesne
25	Crocker, Chris	S	5-11	194	3-9-1980	1	Marshall
24	Griffith, Robert	S	5-11	197	11-30-1970	10	San Diego State
37	Henry, Anthony	CB	6-1	205	11-3-1976	3	South Florida
22	Jameson, Michael	CB	5-11	205	7-14-1979	2	Texas A&M
39	Lehan, Michael	CB	6-1	190	11-25-1979	1	Minnesota
20	Little, Earl	S	6-1	200	3-10-1973	6	Miami (FL)
33	McCutcheon, Daylon	CB	5-10	190	12-9-1976	5	Southern California
27	Williams, Roosevelt	CB	6-1	196	9-10-1978	2	Tuskegee
37	Young, David	S	6-1	209	5-17-1979	1	Georgia Southern

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
59	Bentley, Kevin	LB	6-1	245	12-29-1979	2	Northwestern
52	Boyer, Brant	LB	6-1	240	6-27-1971	10	Arizona
56	Coates, Sherrod	LB	6-2	225	12-22-1978	1	Western Kentucky
54	Davis, Andra	LB	6-1	255	12-23-1978	2	Florida
55	Gardner, Barry	LB	6-1	245	12-13-1976	5	Northwestern
	Holdman, Warrick	LB	6-1	234	11-22-1975	5	Texas A&M
58	Taylor, Ben	LB	6-2	245	8-31-1978	2	Virginia Tech
51	Thompson, Chaun	LB	6-2	250	5-22-1980	1	West Texas A&M
53	Unck, Mason	LB	6-3	235	9-7-1980	1	Arizona State

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Dawson, Phil	K	5-11	195	1-23-1975	5	Texas
3	Frost, Derrick	K	6-4	200	11-25-1980	0	Northern Iowa



STEVE BEYER

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Jeff Garcia
FB	Lee Suggs
RB	Terrelle Smith
LT	Ross Verba
LG	Enoch DeMar
C	Jeff Faine
RG	Kelvin Garmon
RT	Ryan Tucker
TE	Kellen Winslow
WR	Andre Davis
WR	Quincy Morgan

DEFENSE

LE	Courtney Brown
LT	Gerard Warren
RT	Orpheus Roye
RE	Kenard Lang
LLB	Chaun Thompson
MLB	Andra Davis
RLB	Kevin Bentley
LCB	Anthony Henry
RCB	Daylon McCutcheon
SS	Robert Griffith
FS	Earl Little

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Derrick Frost
K	Phil Dawson
PR	Andre Davis
KR	Andre Davis

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	vs. Baltimore	
Sept. 12		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 2	@ Dallas	
Sept. 19		4:15
	Score:	
WEEK 3	@ New York Giants	
Sept. 26		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 4	vs. Washington	
Oct. 3		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 5	@ Pittsburgh	
Oct. 10		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 6	vs. Cincinnati	
Oct. 17		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 7	vs. Philadelphia	
Oct. 24		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 8	OPEN DATE	
WEEK 9	@ Baltimore	
Nov. 7		8:30
	Score:	
WEEK 10	vs. Pittsburgh	
Nov. 14		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 11	vs. New York Jets	
Nov. 21		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 12	@ Cincinnati	
Nov. 28		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 13	vs. New England	
Dec. 5		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 14	@ Buffalo	
Dec. 12		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 15	vs. San Diego	
Dec. 19		1:00
	Score:	
WEEK 16	@ Miami	
Dec. 26		8:30
	Score:	
WEEK 17	@ Houston	
Jan. 2		1:00
	Score:	

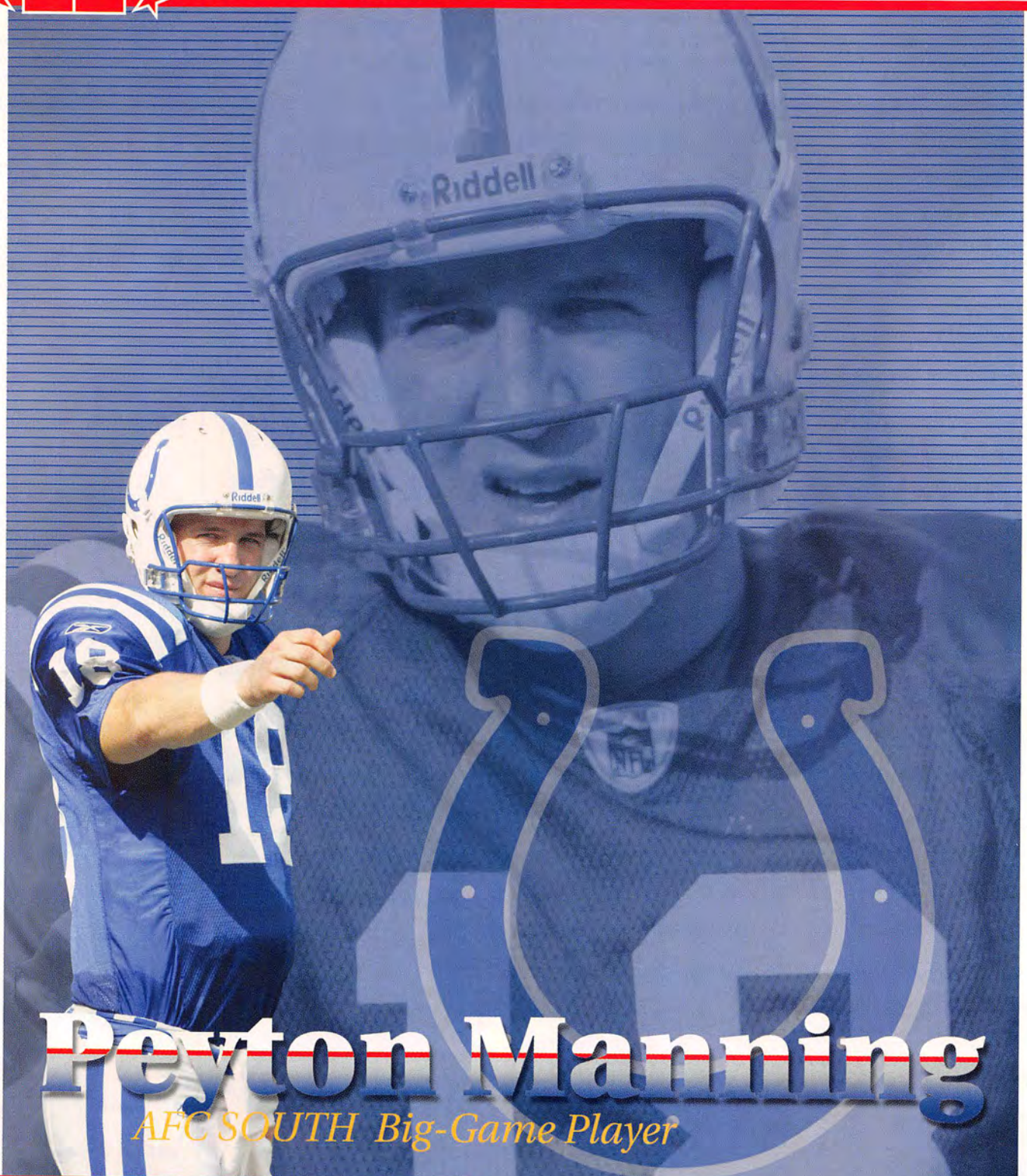
All times Eastern

AFC EAST | AFC NORTH | AFC SOUTH | AFC WEST | NFC EAST | NFC NORTH | NFC SOUTH | NFC WEST

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	6	Winslow Jr., Kellen	TE	6-4	243	7-21-83	Miami (FL)
2	27	Jones, Sean	S	6-1	212	3-2-82	Georgia
4	10	McCown, Luke	QB	6-3	208	7-12-81	Louisiana Tech
5	29	Gordon, Amon	DE	6-2	302	10-13-81	Stanford
6	11	Chambers, Kirk	T	6-7	313	3-19-79	Stanford
7	7	Echemandu, A.	RB	5-10	226	11-21-80	California

(L TO R): TOMASSO DEROSA; DAVID GONZALES/ICON SMI



Peyton Manning

AFC SOUTH Big-Game Player

LIVIO SUAREZ/A.I.M.(2)

Division's Best

BIG-GAME PLAYER	RUSHER	RECEIVER	TACKLER	SPECIAL-TEAMS WARRIOR
Peyton Manning, QB Indianapolis	**Fred Taylor, RB Jacksonville**	**Marvin Harrison, WR Indianapolis**	**Jamie Sharper, LB Houston**	**Mike Vanderjagt, K Indianapolis**
He's developed into league's best at his position.	Has averaged 1,443 yards rushing the last two seasons.	His 94 catches were 49 fewer than previous season.	He's coming off the best season of his career.	Scored 157 points, was perfect on 37 field goals.

Manning will have Colts kicking high, but McNair won't let Titans go away

By John McClain, Houston Chronicle

Last season produced a changing of the guard atop the AFC South, with Indianapolis and Tennessee switching places. They both finished 12-4, but unlike in 2002, it was the Colts who swept the Titans. And it was Indianapolis rather than Tennessee that reached the AFC Championship Game.

This season should produce more of the same. The Colts and Titans suffered significant free-agent losses, but because they have the NFL's co-MVPs in quarterbacks Peyton Manning and Steve McNair, expect them to compete for the division title again.

It's difficult to imagine Manning getting much better than last season when he threw for 4,267 yards and 29 touchdowns. More important, Manning reduced his interceptions from 19 to 10, which had been a priority for coach Tony Dungy, who detests turnovers.

1. INDIANAPOLIS COLTS page 80

Manning still has his collection of terrific skill-position players, including receiver Marvin Harrison (94 catches for 1,272 yards, 10 touchdowns) and running back Edgerrin James (1,259 yards rushing, 11 touchdowns). The Colts should again be one of the highest-scoring teams in the league. Their 27.9-point average per game tied for second, and there's no reason to expect less.

Those who follow the Colts closest believe Manning's four-interception performance in the 24-14 loss at New England in the AFC Championship Game was an aberration. They insist that he'll resemble the quarterback who was magnificent in the first two playoff victories over Denver (41-10) and Kansas City (38-31) in which he was 44-of-56 for 681 yards, eight touchdowns and no interceptions.

Of the key free agents the Colts lost, four were on defense—outside linebacker Marcus Washington, cornerbacks Walt Harris and David Macklin and end Chad Bratzke. They slipped from eighth to 11th in defense, and stopping the run, especially power-running teams, was still a problem.

Not only did the Colts tie for 20th against the run, they allowed 21 points a game, which also ranked 20th. Perhaps they have so much talent and money invested in the offense that it's unrealistic for them to improve much on defense, but because Dungy coached that side of the ball, it's unfathomable that he'll let it get worse.

2. TENNESSEE TITANS page 84

Because they lost twice to the Colts last season and lost defensive end Jevon Kearse and defensive tackle Robaire Smith to free agency, tight end Frank Wycheck to retirement and receiver Justin McCareins to a trade, the Titans may have to fight for another wild-card appearance.

As long as McNair stays healthy, he can carry his team as well as any player in the league. The Titans are loaded with excellent receivers, including Derrick Mason (95 catches for 1,303 yards with eight TDs), but their running game is going through a transition because more emphasis is being placed on Chris Brown, who enters his second season.

One thing is for certain about the Titans: They'll have one of the league's best rushing defenses. Coach Jeff Fisher demands perfection against the run, and they ranked first in run defense. When they limited Jamal Lewis to 35 yards in an AFC wild-card game at Baltimore, the Titans were able to escape with a 20-17 victory.

Like Indianapolis, Tennessee's season ended at New England, but the Titans lost by three compared to the Colts' 10. If they make the playoffs again, there's a good chance the road to Jacksonville and Super Bowl XXXIX will go through Foxboro, Mass.

3. JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS page 88

Jacksonville will host the Super Bowl, but don't expect the Jaguars to be playing in it. In Jack Del Rio's second season as coach, they're trying to improve on a 5-11 record that tied them with Houston for last place in the division.

In the offseason, improvements made at Jacksonville and Houston may have helped them close the gap with Indianapolis and Tennessee, but neither figures to be a playoff team for at least another season. They should be competing for third place. Realistically, their fans should be ecstatic if they finish in the 8-8 range.

4. HOUSTON TEXANS page 92

In their second season, the Texans improved by one victory to 5-11, and if they stay relatively healthy, a .500 record won't be out of the question. They made significant moves in free agency and loaded up on defense in the draft.

Anyone who followed the team closely could see remarkable improvement in several areas. If quarterback David Carr hadn't missed a lot of time with nagging injuries, the offense would have been a lot better. Injuries on defense that depleted the pass rush left them vulnerable on that side of the ball, and yet they still managed to lose by three points each to New England, Indianapolis and Tennessee at Reliant Stadium.

The Texans finished 31st on offense and defense, but the progress made on the offensive line was remarkable. They reduced their sacks from the previous season—when Carr became the most sacked quarterback in NFL history—by more than a half.

TEAMMATE	SENSE OF HUMOR	INTELLECT	SIDELINE STRATEGIST	FRONT-OFFICE EXECUTIVE
Steve McNair, QB Tennessee	**Keith Bulluck, LB Tennessee**	**Peyton Manning, QB Indianapolis**	**Tony Dungy, head coach Indianapolis**	**Bill Polian, President/GM Indianapolis**
He inspires teammates because he plays hurt.	Win or lose, he's always got good material.	No player does more at the line of scrimmage.	Doesn't get enough credit for his Xs and Os.	Five-time winner of NFL Executive-of-the-Year award.

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 1 2003 RECORD: 12-4

He said it:

"I don't think we're going to throw for 6,000 yards or 50 touchdowns. But I think we'll turn the ball over less, make the right reads a little more often. I think he'll improve in some ways people don't really see."

—Tony Dungy on Peyton Manning

STADIUM FACTS

RCA Dome

Capacity: **60,272** Turf: **Artificial**
Tickets: **317-239-5151**
Web site: **www.colts.com**

Avg. Attendance **62,121**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **103**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$47.39**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.00 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.00 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: With 73 overall victories from 1963-69, Hall-of-Famer Don Shula still stands as the winningest coach in Colts history.

STAT: Peyton Manning and Marvin Harrison have connected on 68 touchdowns, making them the third-most-prolific combination in NFL history behind Steve Young-Jerry Rice (85) and Dan Marino-Mark Clayton (79).

LOOK IT UP: Tony Dungy is the only coach in the league to have defeated all 32 current NFL teams.

THE COUNT:

41 – Consecutive regular-season field goals made by Mike Vanderjagt, an NFL record.

2-8 – Peyton Manning's overall career record vs. New England.

10,072 – Receiving yards for Marvin Harrison in first eight NFL seasons.

EZRA SHAW/GETTY IMAGES

Peyton Manning, QB

Leaky defense could keep Indy from being all that they can be

Manning, offense to carry load again

Coach Tony Dungy and quarterback Peyton Manning improved their postseason reputations last season when Indianapolis won playoff games over Denver and Kansas City before coming unraveled against New England. It was the second time Dungy has taken his team to a conference championship game. Manning earned the first playoff victories of his career. Now they need to take the next step and reach Super Bowl XXXIV.

The Colts will go as far as their defense can take them. They were third in offense, including first in passing and second in scoring. They reduced their turnovers. But they weren't as efficient on defense, where they ranked 11th, including tied for 20th against the run and fifth against the pass.

Because of cap problems, they were unable to keep some of their free agents or sign someone else's. But Colts President Bill Polian did trade out of the first round of the draft and ended up with nine picks. Most of those rookies will at least have to contribute in backup roles.

Offensive line — Grade: B

This is a smart, well-coached group of veterans who play well as a unit. Left tackle Tarik Glenn is the most well-known, but the group is vastly underrated compared to the publicity the Colts' skill-position players receive. Right tackle Ryan Diem, guards Rick DeMulling and Steve Sciullo and center Jeff Saturday combine with Glenn to protect quarterback Peyton Manning like the White House.

As a group, they're better at pass protection than run blocking, but they're no slouches blocking for running back Edgerrin James, whose 4.1-yard average per carry was better than the team's 3.7. The Colts allowed only 19 sacks, tied for second in the league.

Quarterbacks — Grade: A+

Ask every coach what player they would start a franchise with, and almost all will say Manning, who's coming off the best season of his career. Manning's only problem is that he can't beat the Patriots. After losing the AFC Championship Game at Foxboro, where he threw four interceptions, he's 2-8 against the Patriots, including 0-5 at New England.

Of all of Manning's amazing statistics, the one that's most impressive is that he has never missed a start and seldom misses a play. His durability and consistency are hallmarks of his greatness. No quarterback has more freedom at the line of scrimmage. The confidence offensive coordinator Tom Moore shows in Manning is contagious throughout the team.

Running backs — Grade: B

Edgerrin James doesn't have the breakaway speed he had before undergoing reconstructive knee surgery in 2001, but he still rushed for 1,259 yards and 11 touchdowns. Because he lacks the same elusiveness, he's not as dangerous as a receiver, either. Still, James seemed to improve as the season progressed, so maybe he'll be close to his previous form this season.

Dominic Rhodes and Ricky Williams are competent backups, but the coaches wouldn't mind finding an upgrade at this position in case something happens to James. Fullback Tom Lopienski is a lead blocker who spends a lot of time on the bench when the offense uses one back and two tight ends.

Receivers — Grade: A

Reggie Wayne plays in the shadow of Marvin Harrison. Harrison, of course, has become a perennial Pro Bowl selection and remains Manning's favorite target. Although Wayne caught 68 passes and scored seven touchdowns, he's still looking for a breakout season, the kind that will catapult him out of the shadows and into the spotlight.

As if the Colts didn't have enough tight ends with Marcus Pollard (40 receptions for 541 yards) and last year's No. 1 pick, Dallas Clark (29 for 340), they used a third-round pick on Ben Hartsock, a 264-pounder who won a national championship at Ohio State. Pollard and Clark are better receivers than blockers, and the Colts need someone at this position they can count on to clear a hole.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	367.1	3
Rushing	105.9	19
Passing	261.2	1
Scoring	447	2T
Punt Returns	7.7	23
Kick Returns	23.6	6
Red Zone TD %	51.6	14
Total Defense	299.3	11
Against Rush	123.8	20T
Against Pass	175.6	5
Points Allowed	336	20
Interceptions	15	14T
Sacks	31	16
Turnover Diff.	+10	6

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
348	104	212	32

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
62	296	32	24

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
16	29	3	3

COLTS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **JOHNNY UNITAS** — Career Passing Yards: **40,239**; Career TD Passes: **290**
2. **PEYTON MANNING** — Career Passing Yards: **24,884**; Career TD Passes: **167**
3. **BERT JONES** — Career Passing Yards: **18,190**; Career TD Passes: **124**

FINALSHOT/JRP

Defensive line — Grade: C

No matter how much the Colts invest in this area, they've still got only one lineman who's above average—end Dwight Freeney, one of the league's premier pass rushers who had 11 sacks last season. After Freeney, no one gets to the passer with any degree of consistency. Nine of the team's 31 sacks are gone with the free-agent departures of outside linebacker Marcus Washington and end Chad Bratzke.

Opponents averaged 4.5 yards a carry and rushed for 19 touchdowns against the Colts. Freeney and his counterpart at end, Raheem Brock, and tackles Larry Tripplett and Montae Reagor get pushed around too much. They still have trouble with powerful backs who like to pound between the tackles.

Linebackers — Grade: C-

The loss of Washington leaves a hole at one outside spot. David Thornton starts for the second season at the other outside position, but he's not good enough on the pass rush to make up for losing Washington. Rob Morris controls the middle, but he's not the kind of physical presence required at his position.

Veteran Jim Nelson will compete with two draft choices—Gilbert Gardner

Dungy on track to shed 'underachiever' label

Tony Dungy is the only coach in the NFL to guide teams to the playoffs in each of the last five seasons. He turned a hapless Buccaneers franchise into perennial contenders and has taken the Colts to the postseason twice after inheriting a 6-10 club from Jim Mora.

Tony Dungy

AL KOOISTRA

Dungy has succeeded by emphasizing defense, building one of the best-ever units in Tampa Bay, and by capitalizing on an offense full of playmakers in Indianapolis.

So why do some still regard him as an underachiever?

Not reaching the Super Bowl is the main reason, though Dungy has reached both conference championship games. More likely, some view his quiet, low-key demeanor as a sign of weakness in a league full of screaming egos and self-proclaimed sideline geniuses.

In Tampa, Dungy developed a reputation for being a hopeless conservative on offense, playing for the 13-10 win. Yet his defense-first philosophy has spread throughout the league, with Baltimore and New England winning Super Bowls using similar styles.

Even Jon Gruden, with his reputation for offensive wizardry, tinkered little with the system he inherited from Dungy and won a Super Bowl with the Bucs.

Yet Gruden did bring to Tampa an in-your-face style that was lacking under Dungy, who believes players should be self-motivating, workmanlike professionals like Colts receiver Marvin Harrison and not cell phone-toting divas complaining about how they're used.

Dungy's personality has not changed in Indianapolis, though he's built a more balanced roster. He had a 1,200-yard rusher and league co-MVP on offense, neither of which he had in Tampa. The Colts have progressed on defense, producing their first positive turnover ratio last season (plus-10) since 1995.

Like the 1999 Buccaneers, who lost a tight NFC title game to St. Louis, the Colts seem capable of reaching the next level. Dungy again will have to prove that he's not just a builder but a finisher.

"I just don't think we have hit our stride yet in how good we can be and how well we have to play, play in and play out," Dungy says. "I think we'll continue to get better. I think we're close."

—Pete Williams

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 12, Lost 4

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	9-6	at Cleveland
09/14	W	33-7	Tennessee
09/21	W	23-13	Jacksonville
09/28	W	55-21	at New Orleans
10/06	W	38-35 (OT)	at Tampa Bay
10/12	L	23-20 (OT)	Carolina
10/26	W	30-21	Houston
11/02	W	23-17	at Miami
11/09	L	28-23	at Jacksonville
11/16	W	38-31	New York Jets
11/23	W	17-14	at Buffalo
11/30	L	38-34	New England
12/07	W	29-27	at Tennessee
12/14	W	38-7	Atlanta
12/21	L	31-17	Denver
12/28	W	20-17	at Houston

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
James	310	1259	4.1	43	11
Rhodes	37	157	4.2	25	0
R. Williams	48	155	3.2	19	2
Mungro	24	60	2.5	9	2
Manning	28	26	0.9	10	0
H. Smith	1	21	21.0	21t	1
Huard	3	8	2.7	9	0
Walters	1	6	6.0	6	0
Harrison	1	3	3.0	3	0
Colts	**453**	**1695**	**3.7**	**43**	**16**
Opponents	**437**	**1980**	**4.5**	**42**	**19**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Harrison	94	1272	13.5	79t	10
Wayne	68	838	12.3	57t	7
James	51	292	5.7	17	0
Pollard	40	541	13.5	70	3
Walters	36	456	12.7	46t	3
Clark	29	340	11.7	42	1
Stokley	22	211	9.6	37t	3
R. Williams	22	157	7.1	17t	1
Moorehead	7	101	14.4	35	0
Rhodes	6	62	10.3	27	1
Davenport	3	23	7.7	9	0
Pyatt	1	2	2.0	2	0
Manning	1	-2	-2.0	-2	0
Mungro	1	-4	-4.0	-4	0
Colts	**381**	**4289**	**11.3**	**79t**	**29**
Opponents	**277**	**3034**	**11.0**	**74t**	**18**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Manning	566	379	4267	29	10
Huard	3	2	22	0	0
Colts	**569**	**381**	**4289**	**29**	**10**
Opponents	**445**	**277**	**3034**	**18**	**15**

SACKS

Freeney 11.0, Washington 6.0, Mathis 3.5, Bratzke 3.0, Brock 2.0, Brackett 1.0, Thornton 1.0, Tripplett 1.0, J. Williams 1.0, Reagor 0.5

Colts 31.0, Opponents 19.0

t=touchdown

Dwight Freeney, DE

NEWMAN LOWRANCE

(third round) and Kendyll Pope (fourth)—for a starting outside job. At the least, the rookies could get significant playing time off the bench. No matter what happens, odds are that this will still be the weakest position on defense.

Secondary

Grade: C+

Interestingly, the Colts lost two corners, starter Walt Harris and reserve David Macklin, and yet this position wasn't a priority in the draft. Even though the safeties, Mike Doss and Idrees Bashir, are more effective than the cornerbacks, corner wasn't a priority. Doss should have made the All-Rookie Team because he was better than expected. He's got a chance to become a Pro Bowl player.

Second-rounder Bob Sanders of Iowa, a 5-8 mighty-mite with 4.3 speed, looks like a corner, but he plays either safety position. Nick Harper, who led the team with four interceptions, is the best corner. Donald Strickland, who played safety last season, might make the transition to corner. Harper covers a lot of ground. If Strickland continues to improve, he could become a force.

Special teams

Grade: B-

Mike Vanderjagt had perhaps the greatest season of any kicker in NFL history. He was second in the league with 157 points, and he made 37 of 37 field goals. He didn't miss until the Pro Bowl. Vanderjagt loves pressure-packed situations. He gets good distance but was forced to attempt only one of at least 50 yards.

Punter Hunter Smith had only three touchbacks and put 20 kicks inside the 20. His 35.5-yard net average was nothing special, but he's reliable. Kickoff returns were above average. Punt returns were below average. Kickoff and punt coverage should be mediocre. The Colts didn't return a kick for a touchdown, but they allowed two kickoff returns for scores.

Management

Grade: A-

There aren't many personnel experts better than Polian, who has built three teams that either made the Super Bowl (Buffalo) or reached a conference championship game (Carolina, Indianapolis). Polian and his staff have their work cut out trying to deal with the salary cap. Manning's record-breaking contract will hinder free-agent signings for years.

Dungy has a quality staff, especially offensive coordinator Moore. There's only so much they can do with the material the coaches have on defense.

Bottom line

If Manning stays healthy and the defense doesn't collapse, the Colts will be a bona fide Super Bowl contender again. Dungy knows exactly what he's got offensively, but question marks are rampant on defense. Just about everything depends on a defense that slipped a bit last season and can't afford to do it again.

COLTS ROSTER

Tony Dungy, head coach

Jim Caldwell, quarterbacks; **Clyde Christensen,** wide receivers; **Gene Huey,** running backs; **Ron Meeks,** defensive coord.; **Tom Moore,** offensive coord.; **Howard Mudd,** offensive line; **Mike Murphy,** linebackers; **Russ Purnell,** special teams; **Diron Reynolds,** defensive asst.; **John Teerlinck,** defensive line; **Ricky Thomas,** tight ends; **Alan Williams,** asst. head coach

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
18	Manning, Peyton	QB	6-5	230	3-24-1976	6	Tennessee
16	Sauter, Cory	QB	6-4	215	11-21-1974	2	Minnesota
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
64	DeMulling, Rick	G	6-4	304	7-21-1977	3	Idaho
71	Diem, Ryan	G	6-6	331	7-1-1979	3	Northern Illinois
76	Freitas, Makoa	T	6-4	307	11-23-1979	1	Arizona
78	Glenn, Tarik	T	6-5	332	5-25-1976	7	California
69	Newton, Jim	T	6-9	297	10-13-1978	1	Utah State
56	Peko, Tupe	C	6-4	305	9-19-1978	1	Michigan State
63	Saturday, Jeff	C	6-2	292	6-8-1975	5	North Carolina
74	Sciullo, Steve	G	6-5	330	8-27-1980	1	Marshall
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
43	Allen, Brian	RB	5-9	205	4-20-1980	1	Stanford
32	James, Edgerrin	RB	6-1	214	8-1-1978	5	Miami (FL)
36	Lopienski, Tom	RB	6-1	246	6-12-1979	1	Notre Dame
23	Mungro, James	RB	5-9	214	2-13-1978	2	Syracuse
33	Rhodes, Dominic	RB	5-9	203	1-17-1979	2	Midwestern Texas State
35	Williams, Ricky	RB	5-7	195	8-29-1978	2	Texas Tech
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
44	Clark, Dallas	TE	6-3	257	6-12-1979	1	Iowa
80	Davenport, Joe Dean	TE	6-6	268	10-29-1976	3	Arkansas
46	Fletcher, Bryan	TE	6-5	235	3-23-1979	0	UCLA
88	Harrison, Marvin	WR	6-1	175	8-25-1972	8	Syracuse
49	Mitchell, Pete	TE	6-2	243	10-9-1971	8	Boston College
85	Moorehead, Aaron	WR	6-3	200	11-5-1980	1	Illinois
81	Pollard, Marcus	TE	6-3	247	2-8-1972	9	Bradley
84	Pyatt, Brad	WR	5-11	195	4-16-1980	1	Northern Colorado
83	Rubin, DeAndrew	WR	5-11	180	10-8-1978	0	South Florida
48	Snow, Justin	TE	6-3	240	12-21-1976	4	Baylor
83	Stokley, Brandon	WR	5-11	197	6-23-1976	5	Louisiana-Lafayette
86	Walters, Troy	WR	5-7	172	12-15-1976	4	Stanford
87	Wayne, Reggie	WR	6-1	203	11-17-1978	3	Miami (FL)
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
79	Brock, Raheem	DE	6-4	274	6-10-1978	2	Temple
93	Freeney, Dwight	DE	6-1	268	1-4-1978	2	Syracuse
98	Mathis, Robert	DE	6-2	235	2-26-1981	1	Alabama A&M
95	Pugh, David	DT	6-2	270	7-24-1979	1	Virginia Tech
90	Reagor, Montae	DT	6-3	285	6-29-1977	5	Texas Tech
97	Reese, Allen	DT	5-10	294	10-10-1980	1	Kansas State
99	Scioli, Brad	DE	6-3	280	9-6-1976	5	Penn State
75	Tripplett, Larry	DT	6-2	300	1-18-1979	2	Washington
96	Williams, Josh	DT	6-3	290	8-9-1976	4	Michigan
70	Wright, Keith	DT	6-2	275	6-8-1980	0	Missouri
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
28	Bashir, Idrees	S	6-2	198	12-7-1978	3	Memphis
41	Bird, Cory	S	5-10	213	8-10-1978	3	Virginia Tech
34	Doering, Jason	S	6-1	201	4-22-1978	3	Wisconsin
20	Doss, Mike	S	5-10	207	3-24-1981	1	Ohio State
39	Floyd, Anthony	CB	5-10	202	2-1-1981	1	Louisville
25	Harper, Nick	CB	5-10	182	9-10-1974	3	Fort Valley State
29	Jefferson, Joseph	CB	6-1	207	2-15-1980	1	Western Kentucky
30	Strickland, Donald	CB	5-10	187	11-24-1980	1	Colorado
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
58	Brackett, Gary	LB	5-11	235	5-23-1980	1	Rutgers
59	June, Cato	LB	6-1	227	11-18-1979	1	Michigan
94	Morris, Rob	LB	6-2	243	1-18-1975	4	Brigham Young
57	Nelson, Jim	LB	6-1	234	4-16-1975	5	Penn State
54	Thompson, Donnel	LB	6-1	237	2-17-1978	3	Wisconsin
50	Thornton, David	LB	6-2	230	11-1-1978	2	North Carolina
52	Whiteside, Keyon	LB	6-1	229	1-31-1980	1	Tennessee
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Smith, Hunter	P	6-2	209	8-9-1977	5	Notre Dame
13	Vanderjagt, Mike	K	6-5	211	3-24-1970	6	West Virginia

AJ MAST/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

SCOTT BOEHM

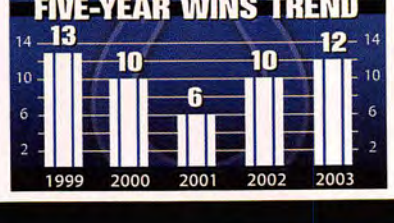
PROJECTED STARTERS

	OFFENSE
QB	Peyton Manning
FB	Tom Lopienski
RB	Edgerrin James
LT	Tarik Glenn
LG	Rick DeMulling
C	Jeff Saturday
RG	Steve Sciullo
RT	Ryan Diem
TE	Marcus Pollard
WR	Marvin Harrison
WR	Reggie Wayne

	DEFENSE
LE	Raheem Brock
LT	Larry Tripplett
RT	Montae Reagor
RE	Dwight Freeney
LLB	Jim Nelson
MLB	Rob Morris
RLB	David Thornton
LCB	Nick Harper
RCB	Donald Strickland
SS	Mike Doss
FS	Idrees Bashir

	SPECIAL TEAMS
P	Hunter Smith
K	Mike Vanderjagt
PR	Brad Pyatt
KR	Dominic Rhodes

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND



SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ New England	
Sept. 9	9:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 2 @ Tennessee	
Sept. 19	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 3 vs. Green Bay	
Sept. 26	4:15
W / L	Score:

WEEK 4 @ Jacksonville	
Oct. 3	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 5 vs. Oakland	
Oct. 10	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 6 OPEN DATE

WEEK 7 vs. Jacksonville	
Oct. 24	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 8 @ Kansas City	
Oct. 31	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 9 vs. Minnesota	
Nov. 8	9:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 10 vs. Houston	
Nov. 14	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 11 @ Chicago	
Nov. 21	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 12 @ Detroit	
Nov. 25	12:30
W / L	Score:

WEEK 13 vs. Tennessee	
Dec. 5	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 14 @ Houston	
Dec. 12	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 15 vs. Baltimore	
Dec. 19	8:30
W / L	Score:

WEEK 16 vs. San Diego	
Dec. 26	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 17 @ Denver	
Jan. 2	4:15
W / L	Score:

All times Eastern

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
2	12	Sanders, Bob	S	5-8	204	02-24-81	Iowa
3	5	Hartsock, Ben	TE	6-3	264	07-5-80	Ohio State
3	6	Gardner, Gilbert	LB	6-1	229	05-9-82	Purdue
4	11	Pope, Kendyll	LB	6-1	220	03-9-81	Florida State
4	29	David, Jason	CB	5-8	168	06-12-82	Washington State
5	9	Scott, Jake	T	6-4	281	04-16-81	Idaho
6	8	Hutchins, Von	CB	5-9	179	02-24-81	Mississippi
6	28	Sorgi, Jim	QB	6-3	194	12-3-80	Wisconsin
7	28	Kimball, David	K	6-1	209	01-13-82	Penn State

TENNESSEE TITANS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 2 2003 RECORD: 12-4

He said it:

"We brought him in here to fill a depth need, because we lost Frank (Wycheck) ... He brings flexibility and versatility and he brings a downfield threat. ... He can get open and run and outrun people, so I think that's where he'll be most effective."

—coach Jeff Fisher on second-round draft pick TE Ben Troupe

STADIUM FACTS

The Coliseum

Capacity: **68,798** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **615-565-4200**
Web site: **www.titansonline.com**

Avg. Attendance **68,809**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **100.1**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$43.35**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$15.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$6.00 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.00 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Eddie George has started 128 consecutive games, the longest active streak among NFL running backs.

STAT: With 1,303 yards in 2003, Derrick Mason became the first pass catcher in franchise history to record three consecutive 1,000-yard-receiving seasons.

LOOK IT UP: The Titans have not allowed a 100-yard rusher at home for a current NFL-best 29 straight regular-season games. The last 100-yard rusher on Tennessee soil was Jacksonville's Fred Taylor on Oct. 16, 2000.

THE COUNT:
4 – Combined games started last season by Titans' 2003 draftees.
5 – Postseason OT games in Houston/Tennessee franchise history, an NFL record.
42-30 – Oilers/Titans NFL-best road record since 1995.

McNair assures contention for Titans, but bona fide running game could mean playoffs

Former Cardinal coach McGinnis set to take over linebackers

In the highest-scoring season of Jeff Fisher's nine full seasons as coach, the Titans became known as an explosive offensive team featuring quarterback Steve McNair. They set a franchise record with eight games of at least 30 points, including six in a row. What the Titans didn't do well was run the ball, which is uncharacteristic of a Fisher-coached team. Although they were eighth in offense, including fifth for passing, they were 26th in rushing.

Offensive coordinator Mike Heimerdinger treasures this annual statistic of near perfection: time of possession. The Titans averaged 32:52 to tie for second.

Other key offensive statistics? They were plus-13 in turnover ratio (third). They threw only nine interceptions (second), scored 30 touchdowns passing (third), allowed 25 sacks (tied for fifth) and converted 40.8 percent of their third-down situations (ninth).

Tennessee was no slouch defensively, ranking 12th overall, first against the run and 30th against the pass. The latter statistic is deceiving, according to the coaches, because opponents were forced to come from behind so often. Besides being so stingy against the run, defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz takes a lot of pride in ranking first in third-down defense (27.7 percent).

Offensive line

Grade: B-

The line returns intact, which is unusual because the Titans usually have a new starting center. Left tackle Brad Hopkins, who turns 34 in September, is coming off a Pro Bowl season. He and right tackle Fred Miller, 31, have a combined 19 years of experience. Guards Zach Piller and Benji Olson—the best and most underrated of this group—have 11 years of experience between them. Justin Hartwig returns at center.

Individually, the Titans don't get much recognition or win many awards, but they excel at

Derrick Mason, WR

TOMASSO DEROSA

pass protection, and they're competent run blockers, even though their 3.3-yard average per carry didn't show it. But that's more of a reflection of the backs than the blockers. Only two offensive linemen, none on the first day, were among their 13 draft choices.

Quarterbacks

Grade: A

McNair may have been the league's co-MVP, but he wasn't the whole show. When McNair was injured, Billy Volek and Neil O'Donnell came off the bench for starting assignments. Volek re-signed rather than leave for more lucrative offers.

McNair threw a career-high 24 touchdown passes and a career-low seven interceptions. Not only did he compile a career-best passer rating of 100.4, but he led the NFL on third down (117.7) and ranked second in the fourth quarter (96.8). McNair performs best in clutch situations, which is a major reason Tennessee won five games by seven or fewer points. The way he plays with injuries is the stuff of legends. At 31, he actually seems to play better when he's hurt.

Running backs

Grade: C

The Titans' 3.3-yard average per carry was tied for the NFL's worst, but it didn't keep them from trying. They ran 486 times to the opponents' 342. The longest run was 28 yards by rookie Chris Brown, who figures to get more playing time if he can stay healthy as he adds speed that's severely missing.

Eddie George hasn't missed a start in his eight years, but he fought a salary-cap battle with management over much of the offseason. He and the legendary Jim Brown are the only backs in history to reach 10,000 yards without missing a start. Veteran Robert Holcombe, who switched between halfback and fullback, gave them three players with more than 200 yards.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	343.8	8
Rushing	101.4	26
Passing	242.4	5
Scoring	435	5
Punt Returns	11.6	8
Kick Returns	19.1	31
Red Zone TD %	53.3	11T
Total Defense	306.3	12
Against Rush	80.9	1
Against Pass	225.4	30
Points Allowed	324	13
Interceptions	21	8T
Sacks	38	17
Turnover Diff.	+13	3

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
310	84	211	15

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
60	282	32	19

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
11	30	7	5

TITANS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **STEVE MCNAIR**
   Career Passing Yards: **22,655**
   Career TD Passes: **132**
2. **WARREN MOON**
   Career Passing Yards: **49,325**
   Career TD Passes: **291**
3. **GEORGE BLANDA**
   Career Passing Yards: **26,920**
   Career TD Passes: **236**

RICK STEWART/GETTY IMAGES

Receivers

Grade: B

The Titans are so talented and deep at this position that they could afford to trade Justin McCareins to the Jets for a second-round pick that was used on tight end Ben Troupe to replace the retired Frank Wycheck. Derrick Mason, who played in the Pro Bowl, remains McNair's favorite target going into his eighth season. He had 95 catches for 1,303 yards and eight touchdowns last year.

Drew Bennett, a college quarterback signed as an undrafted free agent, continues to improve at the other starting spot. Last year's No. 2 pick, Tyrone Calico, who has size and speed, started fast but hit the wall. His progress is the main reason McCareins was traded. Tight end is also solid. Erron Kinney actually had 41 catches to Wycheck's 17. Adding Troupe, the second-rated tight end in the draft, allows the Titans to use two tight ends who can catch when they don't want to play three wideouts at a time.

Defensive line

Grade: C

Losing two starters in end Jevon Kearse and tackle Robaire Smith—they combined for 14 of the team's 38 sacks—could have been devastating. Because lazy and inconsistent tackle Albert Haynesworth has been such a disappointment, the only returning starter the

McNair's response to pain often means a net gain for the Titans' offense

Steve McNair expects to be fully recovered from his February ankle surgery by training camp and plans to start the 2004 season without any significant ailments.

Steve McNair

TOM DIPACE

It's hard to say if that's good news for the Tennessee Titans. McNair, perhaps more than any player in NFL history except Brett Favre, has effectively played through pain, to the point where he seems to perform better if he's nursing an injured limb.

McNair would like to be healthy all the time, of course, but admits the injuries help him summon some mental and physical reserves.

"It's hard to explain my performance level when I'm injured," says McNair, the NFL's co-MVP last season. "It goes back to high school when my coach told me that when you're in pain you tend to stay more focused on what you have to do. I took that to heart, and I think that's how I play now. I can just concentrate better when I'm playing in pain."

The ankle surgery was the fifth major operation for McNair, who since becoming a starter in 1997 has endured 19 separate injuries. But he has missed only eight games, including five because of back surgery in September 1999.

In 2002, McNair fought through toe, rib and back injuries—some at the same time. He'd often sit out practices during the week to rest, only to come back and deliver a memorable performance on Sunday. Last season, hampered by a calf injury and a cracked bone spur on his left ankle, he led the NFL with a 100.4 quarterback rating.

McNair's durability started at an early age, when he learned how to deal with three older brothers. After burning his hand, he let his mother treat it by sticking it in Vaseline, never letting his brothers see how much it hurt. These days, he's helped by his wife, Mechelle, a nursing school graduate.

In February, *USA Today* rated McNair third in its ranking of the 10 toughest athletes, trailing only Favre and Allen Iverson.

—Pete Williams

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 12, Lost 4

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	25-20	Oakland
09/14	L	33-7	at Indianapolis
09/21	W	27-12	New Orleans
09/28	W	30-13	at Pittsburgh
10/05	L	38-30	at New England
10/12	W	38-17	Houston
10/19	W	37-17	at Carolina
10/26	W	30-17	at Jacksonville
11/09	W	31-7	Miami
11/16	W	10-3	Jacksonville
11/23	W	38-31	at Atlanta
12/01	L	24-17	at New York Jets
12/07	L	29-27	Indianapolis
12/14	W	28-26	Buffalo
12/21	W	27-24	at Houston
12/28	W	33-13	Tampa Bay

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
George	312	1031	3.3	27	5
Brown	56	221	3.9	28	0
Holcombe	63	201	3.2	21	1
McNair	38	138	3.6	23	4
McCareins	1	13	13.0	13	0
Mason	3	11	3.7	7	0
Calico	1	5	5.0	5	0
Volek	11	4	0.4	5	1
O'Donnell	1	-1	-1.0	-1	0
Titans	**486**	**1623**	**3.3**	**28**	**11**
Opponents	**342**	**1295**	**3.8**	**42**	**10**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Mason	95	1303	13.7	50t	8
McCareins	47	813	17.3	73	7
Kinney	41	381	9.3	28	3
Bennett	32	504	15.8	48	4
George	22	163	7.4	22	0
Holcombe	19	121	6.4	11	1
Calico	18	297	16.5	45	4
Wycheck	17	165	9.7	25	2
Meier	13	159	12.2	27	0
Brown	8	61	7.6	11	0
Berlin	1	50	50.0	50t	1
McGarrahan	1	10	10.0	10	0
McNair	1	4	4.0	4	0
Titans	**315**	**4031**	**12.8**	**73**	**30**
Opponents	**332**	**3829**	**11.5**	**86t**	**20**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
McNair	400	250	3215	24	7
Volek	69	44	545	4	1
O'Donnell	27	18	232	2	1
Hentrich	5	2	25	0	0
Bennett	1	1	14	0	0
Titans	**502**	**315**	**4031**	**30**	**9**
Opponents	**546**	**332**	**3829**	**20**	**21**

SACKS

Kearse 9.5, Carter 5.5, Smith 4.5, Thomas 4.0, Bulluck 3.0, Hall 3.0, Haynesworth 2.5, Boiman 1.5, Calmus 1.0, Long 1.0, McGarrahan 1.0, Schulters 1.0, Ta. Williams 0.5

Titans 38.0, Opponents 25.0

t=touchdown

coaches can count on is Kevin Carter, who's supposed to move inside full-time. He's been playing tackle in passing situations.

Carlos Hall should start at one end. Undersized Juqua Thomas, a situational rusher with four sacks last year, can't withstand the punishment of playing full-time. That's why the Titans used five of their 13 draft choices on defensive linemen, including three ends. Of this rookie group—ends Travis LaBoy, Antwan Odom and Bo Schobel and tackles Randy Starks and Jared Clauss—one could start and three or four could earn playing time in the eight-man rotation.

Linebackers

Grade: B-

The coaches are hoping to do with the line what they did with the linebackers over the last couple of years. This has gone from a weak link to a strength, and new coach Dave McGinnis, who was fired as Arizona's head coach, gets to coach them. Keith Bulluck is one of the league's best on the outside. He's coming off a Pro Bowl season. Peter Sirmon is vastly underrated at the other outside spot. If Rocky Calmus can stay healthy in the middle in his third season, this can be a terrific threesome.

Rocky Boiman (outside) and Brad Kassell (middle) have starting experience. Robert Reynolds, a fifth-round pick from Ohio State, will have to excel on special teams to make the roster.

Secondary

Grade: B-

Cornerbacks Samari Rolle, who gets the best opposing receiver, and Andre Dyson, who is underrated, are in their fourth season together. Because Tony Beckham and Mike Echols are the only reserves—and only Beckham is reliable—draft choices were used on Penn State's Rich Gardner (third) and North Carolina's Michael Waddell (fourth). They won't start as rookies, but one could see a lot of playing time off the bench.

Safety is a strong position with Lance Schulters and Tank Williams paired together for a third consecutive season. They don't cover a lot of ground, but they hit hard and play the run extremely well. Scott McGarrahan, who signed right before last season, was a pleasant surprise. He should be more valuable off the bench in his second year with the Titans.

Special teams

Grade: B-

What a job the ageless Gary Anderson did when he came out of retirement to replace the injured Joe Nedney. Anderson finished with 123 points, including 27 of 31 field goals. Nedney, who kicks off deep, returns. He's got a better leg than Anderson, but he's not nearly as dependable. Punter Craig Hentrich, who had a 43.9-yard gross average, a 37.8 net, eight touchbacks and 26 kicks downed inside the 20, went to the Pro Bowl. Hentrich also made four of five field goals and completed two of five passes on fake field goals.

STEVE JACOBSON

Keith Bulluck, LB

The coaches have to do something about their return game. McCareins was the primary kickoff- and punt-return specialist, but he was traded. They don't want Mason to have to do it again, so the hope is Waddell can at least handle punts. Kickoff coverage was good, punt coverage mediocre.

Management

Grade: A

General Manager Floyd Reese continues to be the most underrated executive in the league. Despite being at or near the top in "salary-cap hell" each year, somehow Reese and his staff manage to wiggle out of it and keep the team among the league's elite. They have an experienced group of personnel experts who are among the NFL's best.

Fisher is among the best in his profession. He's a dinosaur because he's been on the job since being elevated from defensive coordinator in 1994. He has a solid coaching staff that undergoes very little turnover every year.

Bottom line

As long as McNair doesn't go down for long periods of time, the Titans are capable of beating anyone. The biggest key on the team is the running game—who's going to start and will it improve over last season? The Titans don't deserve to be favored to win the division because they lost twice to the Colts, but they are a division-title contender again.

FINAL GRADE **87**

TITANS ROSTER

Jeff Fisher, head coach

Chuck Cecil, defensive asst.-quality control; **Dave McGinnis**, asst. head coach-linebackers; **Mike Heimerdinger**, offensive coord.; **George Henshaw**, asst. head coach/offense; **Ned James**, offensive asst.-quality control; **Craig Johnson**, quarterbacks; **Alan Lowry**, special teams; **Mike Munchak**, offensive line; **Jim Schwartz**, defensive coord.; **Sherman Smith**, running backs; **Steve Walters**, wide receivers; **Jim Washburn**, defensive line; **Everett Withers**, def. backs

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
13	Gesser, Jason	QB	6-1	204	5-31-1979	0	Washington State
9	McNair, Steve	QB	6-2	235	2-14-1973	9	Alcorn State
7	Volek, Billy	QB	6-2	214	4-28-1976	2	Fresno State

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
58	Amato, Ken	C	6-2	245	5-18-1977	1	Montana State
77	Hartwig, Justin	C	6-4	305	11-21-1978	2	Kansas
72	Hopkins, Brad	T	6-3	305	9-5-1970	11	Illinois
68	Martin, Matt	T	6-6	300	10-12-1979	1	Kansas State
76	Mathews, Jason	T	6-5	285	2-9-1971	10	Texas A&M
71	Miller, Fred	T	6-7	320	2-6-1973	8	Baylor
75	Olson, Benji	G	6-4	320	6-5-1975	6	Washington
69	Piller, Zach	G	6-5	321	5-2-1976	5	Florida
78	Williams, Todd	G	6-5	330	9-4-1978	0	Florida State

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
29	Brown, Chris	RB	6-3	219	4-17-1981	1	Colorado
27	George, Eddie	RB	6-3	235	9-24-1973	8	Ohio State
35	Holcombe, Robert	RB	5-11	208	12-11-1975	6	Illinois
33	Jackson, Ray	RB	6-1	223	8-1-1978	1	Cincinnati

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
83	Bennett, Drew	WR	6-5	206	8-26-1978	3	UCLA
82	Berlin, Eddie	WR	5-11	195	1-14-1978	3	Northern Iowa
87	Calico, Tyrone	WR	6-4	223	11-9-1980	1	Middle Tennessee State
80	Hill, Darrell	WR	6-3	200	6-19-1979	2	Northern Illinois
88	Kinney, Erron	TE	6-5	275	7-28-1977	4	Florida
85	Mason, Derrick	WR	5-10	190	1-17-1974	7	Michigan State
84	Meier, Shad	TE	6-4	255	6-7-1978	3	Kansas State
81	Schifino, Jake	WR	6-1	201	11-15-1979	1	Akron

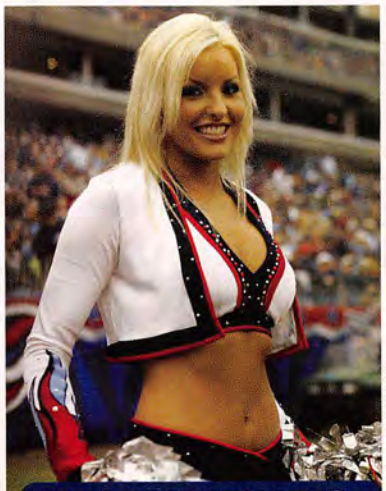
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
96	Atkins, James	DT	6-5	325	6-23-1978	1	Virginia Union
93	Carter, Kevin	DE	6-5	290	9-21-1973	9	Florida
97	Hall, Carlos	DE	6-4	261	1-16-1979	2	Arkansas
92	Haynesworth, Albert	DT	6-6	320	6-17-1981	2	Tennessee
99	Long, Rien	DT	6-6	300	8-7-1981	1	Washington State
94	Thomas, Juqua	DE	6-2	250	5-15-1978	3	Oklahoma State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
24	Beckham, Tony	CB	6-1	187	10-1-1978	2	Wisconsin-Stout
22	Dyson, Andre	CB	5-10	183	5-25-1979	3	Utah
20	Echols, Mike	CB	5-10	190	10-13-1978	2	Wisconsin
23	Nickey, Donnie	S	6-2	215	4-25-1980	1	Ohio State
21	Rolle, Samari	CB	6-1	175	8-10-1976	6	Florida State
31	Schulters, Lance	S	6-2	202	5-27-1975	6	Hofstra
32	Smith, Steve	CB	6-1	190	6-28-1979	1	Oregon
37	Thompson, Lamont	S	6-1	220	7-30-1978	2	Washington State
25	Williams, Tank	S	6-3	223	6-30-1980	2	Stanford
26	Woolfolk, Andre	CB	6-1	197	1-26-1980	1	Oklahoma

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Boiman, Rocky	LB	6-4	236	1-24-1980	2	Notre Dame
53	Bulluck, Keith	LB	6-3	235	4-4-1977	4	Syracuse
54	Calmus, Rocky	LB	6-3	238	8-1-1979	2	Oklahoma
55	Kassell, Brad	LB	6-3	242	1-7-1980	2	North Texas
57	Kramer, Jordan	LB	6-1	230	12-7-1979	1	Idaho
59	Sirmon, Peter	LB	6-2	237	2-18-1977	4	Oregon
56	Wells, Ray	LB	6-1	234	8-20-1980	1	Arizona

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
15	Hentrich, Craig	P	6-3	213	5-18-1971	10	Notre Dame
6	Nedney, Joe	K	6-5	225	3-22-1973	8	San Jose State

TOMASSO DEROSA



NEWMAN LOWRANCE

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Steve McNair
FB	Robert Holcombe
RB	Eddie George
LT	Brad Hopkins
LG	Zach Piller
C	Justin Hartwig
RG	Benji Olson
RT	Fred Miller
TE	Erron Kinney
WR	Derrick Mason
WR	Drew Bennett

DEFENSE

LE	Juqua Thomas
LT	Kevin Carter
RT	Albert Haynesworth
RE	Carlos Hall
LLB	Peter Sirmon
MLB	Rocky Calmus
RLB	Keith Bulluck
LCB	Andre Dyson
RCB	Samari Rolle
SS	Tank Williams
FS	Lance Schulters

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Craig Hentrich
K	Joe Nedney
PR	Michael Waddell
KR	Derrick Mason

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
2	8	Troupe, Ben	TE	6-4	262	09-1-82	Florida
2	10	LaBoy, Travis	DE	6-3	253	08-10-81	Hawaii
2	25	Odom, Antwan	DE	6-4	277	09-24-81	Alabama
3	8	Starks, Randy	DT	6-3	307	12-14-83	Maryland
3	29	Gardner, Rich	CB	5-10	199	02-1-81	Penn State
4	7	Schobel, Bo	DE	6-5	264	03-24-81	TCU
4	28	Waddell, Michael	CB	5-10	187	01-9-81	North Carolina
5	6	Bell, Jacob	G	6-4	306	03-2-81	Miami (OH)
5	33	Reynolds, Robert	LB	6-3	242	05-20-81	Ohio State
6	26	Fleming, Troy	RB	6-1	230	10-1-80	Tennessee
7	29	Clauss, Jared	DT	6-4	294	04-7-81	Iowa
7	38	Amano, Eugene	C	6-3	295	08-1-82	S.E. Missouri State
7	40	McHugh, Sean	RB	6-5	264	05-27-82	Penn State

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	@ Miami	
Sept. 12		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 2	vs. Indianapolis	
Sept. 19		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 3	vs. Jacksonville	
Sept. 26		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 4	@ San Diego	
Oct. 3		4:15
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 5	@ Green Bay	
Oct. 11		9:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 6	vs. Houston	
Oct. 17		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 7	@ Minnesota	
Oct. 24		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 8	vs. Cincinnati	
Oct. 31		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 9	OPEN DATE	
WEEK 10	vs. Chicago	
Nov. 14		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 11	@ Jacksonville	
Nov. 21		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 12	@ Houston	
Nov. 28		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 13	@ Indianapolis	
Dec. 5		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 14	vs. Kansas City	
Dec. 13		9:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 15	@ Oakland	
Dec. 19		4:15
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 16	vs. Denver	
Dec. 25		8:30
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 17	vs. Detroit	
Jan. 2		1:00
W/L	Score:	

All times Eastern

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 3 2003 RECORD: 5-11

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Juran Bolden, CB** (ATL)
- **Mike Compton, G** (NE)
- **Deon Grant, S** (CAR)
- **Greg Favors, LB** (CAR)
- **Dewayne Washington, CB** (PIT)
- **Lewis Sanders, DB** (CLE)
- **Todd Yoder, TE** (TB)
- **Doug Johnson, QB** (ATL)
- **Ephraim Salaam, OT** (DEN)

STADIUM FACTS

ALLTEL Stadium

Capacity: **76,877** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **904-633-2000**
Web site: **www.jaguars.com**

Avg. Attendance **53,509**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **69.6**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$62.85**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.00 / 18oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.00 / 24oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

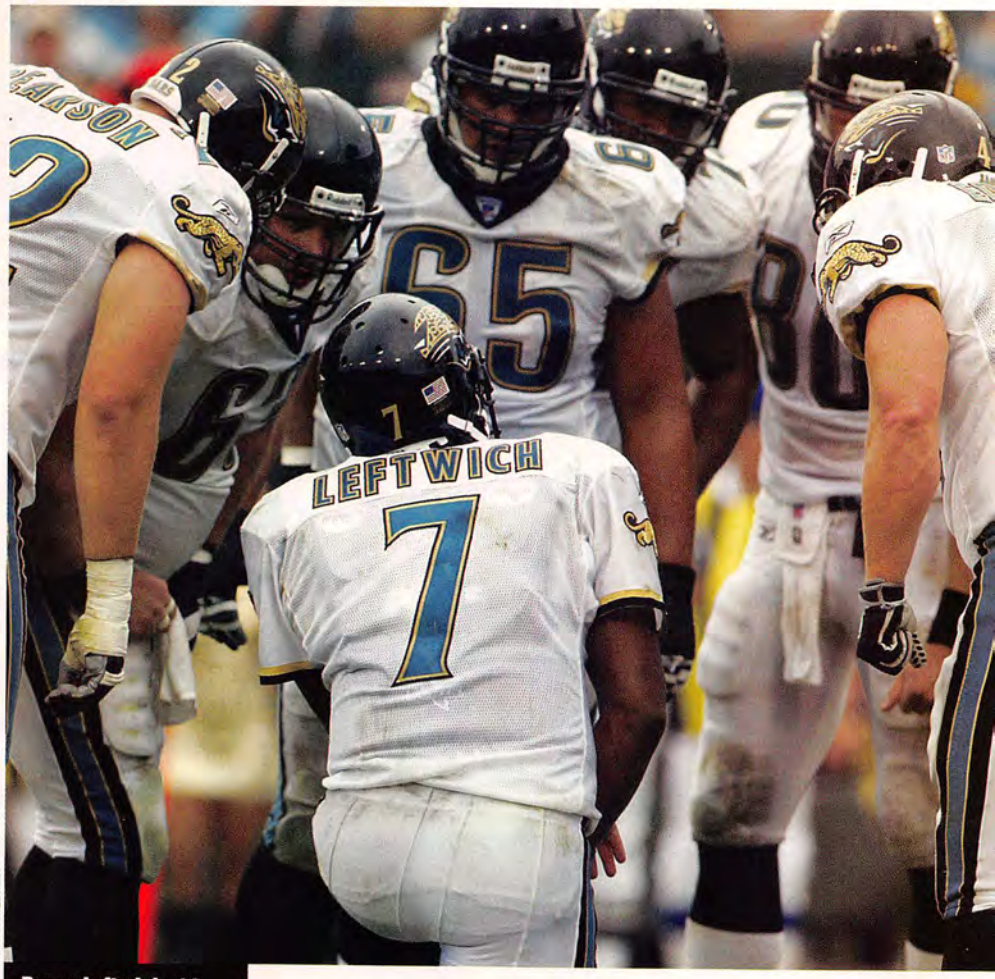
QUICK HITS

FACT: Jimmy Smith is the only player still with the team that was on the Jaguars' roster for their inaugural game on Sept. 3, 1995 vs. the Houston Oilers.

STAT: Quarterback Byron Leftwich threw for 2,819 yards last season, the fourth-best rookie-yardage total in league history.

LOOK IT UP: Including the postseason, the Packers and Rams are the only two teams that the Jacksonville franchise has yet to record a victory against. The Jaguars play the Packers Dec. 19 at Green Bay.

THE COUNT:
0-8 – Jacksonville's 2003 winless road record, the first in franchise history.



MARK FRIEDMAN

Byron Leftwich, QB

With Leftwich now firmly in command, Jaguars appear set to make a big jump

Retooled secondary will be the X-factor

No one can accuse the Jaguars of not trying. While division leaders Indianapolis and Tennessee were hamstrung by the salary cap in free agency, Jacksonville was making significant changes on both sides of the line of scrimmage.

Statistically, the Jaguars were more impressive than some teams that finished with better records, but the only stat that counts is 5-11. If they can improve their pass rush, they should have more interceptions. If they improve their receiving game, it'll take a lot of pressure off second-year quarterback Byron Leftwich, who's a star-in-the-making.

Offensive line — Grade: B-

The success of the offense starts up front, where the Jaguars are compiling an array of talent that has been part of a rebuilding process. The line is underrated considering how well it functions at run blocking and pass protection. The running game averaged 4.3 yards a carry. They allowed only 28 sacks, tied for ninth in the NFL, which was even more remarkable considering they started a rookie quarterback most of the season.

The Jaguars have invested heavily in the line. Right guard Chris Naeole, a former No. 1 pick by New Orleans, is the only starter who isn't home-grown. Tackles Mike Pearson and Maurice Williams are former second-round picks and underrated bookends capable of

breakout seasons. Left guard Vince Manuwai begins his second year. Center Brad Meester is the anchor.

Veteran tackle Ephraim Salaam and guard Mike Compton were signed as free agents. Tackle Sean Bubin, a fifth-round pick, will be given time to develop.

Quarterbacks

Grade: B

The Mark Brunell era ended last season when he was injured and replaced by No. 1 pick Leftwich. But it wasn't official until the Jaguars traded Brunell to Washington. This is Leftwich's team, and it seems to be in good hands.

After a rocky start last season, when he stumbled like a newborn colt, Leftwich got it together and led the Jaguars to a 4-4 record over the second half. He's special because he has so much more to offer than size and arm strength. Leftwich is a tough, natural leader who plays hurt and inspires his teammates.

Despite a rookie quarterback forced to learn on the run, Jacksonville ranked 12th in offense, including eighth rushing and 15th passing. Imagine how much they can improve those rankings if Leftwich gets more help from his receivers. They signed veteran Doug Johnson as a quality backup.

Running backs

Grade: A

When Fred Taylor stays healthy, which he's managed to do the last two seasons, there aren't many backs better. He was fifth in rushing with 1,572 yards, and his 4.6-yard average shows he's still got speed, strength and acceleration for a six-year veteran with a lot of tread worn from his tires. Taylor isn't just a one-trick pony—witness his 48 catches that ranked second on the team.

Coach Jack Del Rio is a former NFL linebacker and defensive coordinator who believes strongly in running the ball to control the clock. LaBrandon Toefield showed promise last year when he ran for 212 yards as a rookie, but Greg Jones, a 250-pound bulldozer from Florida State with a fifth gear, was too good to pass up in the second round.

Veteran Marc Edwards is a solid lead blocker who can catch in a backfield that should be as deep as any.

Receivers

Grade: D

The weakest position on the team got an infusion of talent and experience. Jimmy Smith, 35, is nearing the end of the line. He had a team-high 54 catches. No other wideout had more than journeyman Troy Edwards' 35. Tight end Kyle Brady was hardly a factor in the receiving game, averaging only 9.7 yards on his 29 catches. No wonder the coaches were so desperate.

Rookie Reggie Williams, a big target loaded with ability, better be the savior. When they used the ninth overall pick on the 6-3, 223-pound Williams, they made it clear they believe he can be Leftwich's favorite target for a long time. In the fourth round, they took another 6-3 receiver, Ernest Wilford of Virginia Tech. If both pan out, Leftwich will have the largest pair of wideouts in the league.

Defensive line

Grade: B

For the first time since 1996, Tony Brackens won't be lining up at end for Jacksonville. After leading the team with six sacks,

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	334.9	12
Rushing	129.6	8
Passing	205.3	15
Scoring	276	25
Punt Returns	11.1	11
Kick Returns	19.6	30
Red Zone TD %	44.4	25
Total Defense	291.1	6
Against Rush	87.9	2
Against Pass	203.2	18
Points Allowed	331	18
Interceptions	15	14T
Sacks	24	29
Turnover Diff.	-4	22T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
305	118	163	24

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
45	179	20	13

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
13	17	1	1

JAGUARS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **MARK BRUNELL**
   Career Passing Yards: **25,793**
   Career TD Passes: **144**
2. **BYRON LEFTWICH**
   Career Passing Yards: **2,819**
   Career TD Passes: **14**
3. **ROB JOHNSON**
   Career Passing Yards: **5,795**
   Career TD Passes: **30**

ICON SMI

Jaguars hope to buck trend and truly 'host' Super Bowl

The Jaguars will host Super Bowl XXXIX, though it figures they'll have to acquire tickets if they hope to attend. No team has played at home for the Super Bowl, a streak that stands to continue this season.

Then again, there's reason for optimism in Jacksonville, even for a franchise that in 2003 failed to win a road game for the first time ever. The Jags started 1-7 and finished 5-11, though they won three of their last five games.

ALLTEL Stadium

STEVE WOLTMAN/SPORTSCHROME

The team's run defense developed into one of the best in the league, not allowing a 100-yard rusher after the opener. Rookie quarterback Byron Leftwich started 13 games and showed the potential to be a star, making Mark Brunell expendable.

Perhaps most importantly, the Jaguars finally have extricated themselves from the salary-cap mismanagement that set the team into a tailspin following four straight playoff seasons from 1996 to 1999.

Though no team has played in its home stadium for the Super Bowl, the Los Angeles Rams and San Francisco 49ers played in nearby facilities following the 1979 and 1984 seasons, respectively.

These days, hosting the Super Bowl seems to assure a disappointing regular season. Six of the last 10 teams to host have finished with losing records. None of the three that reached the postseason made it beyond divisional play.

Improving from 5-11 to Super Bowl contenders is tough, though not unprecedented. The New England Patriots went 5-11 in 2000 and won the Super Bowl the following year. The St. Louis Rams were 4-12 in 1998, the season before winning Super Bowl XXXIV.

The Jaguars may have spoiled their fans by going to the AFC title game in both their second and fifth seasons. These days, fans don't pack ALLTEL Stadium unless the Jags face in-state rivals from Miami or Tampa Bay.

Jacksonville is guaranteed of at least one sellout this season, albeit not until February. There's been little thought of the Jags playing in that event since the city was awarded the game in 2000, though the notion is not as preposterous as it once seemed.

—Pete Williams

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 5, Lost 11

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	24-23	at Carolina
09/14	L	38-17	Buffalo
09/21	L	23-13	at Indianapolis
09/28	L	24-20	at Houston
10/05	W	27-21	San Diego
10/12	L	24-10	Miami
10/26	L	30-17	Tennessee
11/02	L	24-17	at Baltimore
11/09	W	28-23	Indianapolis
11/16	L	10-3	at Tennessee
11/23	L	13-10	at New York Jets
11/30	W	17-10	Tampa Bay
12/07	W	27-0	Houston
12/14	L	27-13	at New England
12/21	W	20-19	New Orleans
12/28	L	21-14	at Atlanta

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
F. Taylor	345	1572	4.6	62	6
Toefield	53	212	4.0	30	2
Fuamatu-Ma'afala	35	144	4.1	18	1
Leftwich	25	108	4.3	18	2
Brunell	8	19	2.4	12	1
M. Edwards	7	13	1.9	3	1
Allen	4	8	2.0	6	0
Lewis	1	6	6.0	6	0
T. Edwards	3	-9	-3.0	4	0
Jaguars	**481**	**2073**	**4.3**	**62**	**13**
Opponents	**442**	**1406**	**3.2**	**29t**	**12**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Ji. Smith	54	805	14.9	67	4
F. Taylor	48	370	7.7	60t	1
T. Edwards	35	487	13.9	84t	3
M. Edwards	31	226	7.3	32	0
Brady	29	281	9.7	26	1
Johnson	17	253	14.9	28	1
Hankton	17	166	9.8	22	0
Hatchette	15	203	13.5	45	2
Toefield	14	105	7.5	16	1
Wrighster	13	150	11.5	30	2
Stokes	13	116	8.9	22	0
Allen	6	60	10.0	31	1
Lewis	4	100	25.0	65t	1
Redmond	3	67	22.3	29	0
Luzar	3	30	10.0	21	0
Jaguars	**303**	**3421**	**11.3**	**84t**	**17**
Opponents	**303**	**3385**	**11.2**	**75t**	**23**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Leftwich	418	239	2819	14	16
Brunell	82	54	484	2	0
Garrard	12	9	86	1	0
Toefield	2	1	32	0	0
Jaguars	**515**	**303**	**3421**	**17**	**17**
Opponents	**510**	**303**	**3385**	**23**	**15**

SACKS

Brackens 6.0, Stroud 4.5, Douglas 3.5, Henderson 3.5, Meier 1.5, Ayodele 1.0, Barnes 1.0, Peterson 1.0, Slaughter TM 1.0, Thomas 1.0

Jaguars 24.0, Opponents 28.0

t=touchdown

he was cut loose because of the cap. The Jaguars' pass rush was pathetic anyway, with only 24 sacks. The three returning starters—end Hugh Douglas and tackles Marcus Stroud and John Henderson—combined for 11.5. Douglas used to get that many in Philadelphia without breaking a sweat.

Stroud and Henderson are former No. 1 picks. Douglas was a high-priced free agent last year. Paul Spicer, a four-year veteran, has first dibs on Brackens' job. They stopped the run well, ranking second in run defense and allowing only 3.2 yards per carry, good for best in the league. Stroud and Henderson might be the league's best one-two punch on the inside, but the coaches need the same kind of production from the ends.

Linebackers

Grade: C

When the middle linebacker leads the team with three interceptions, something's wrong among the defensive backs. Mike Peterson, who moved inside in his first season with the Jaguars, spent so much time in coverage that he registered only one sack. He's the best of the group and should be more comfortable in his second season in this system.

Veteran journeyman Greg Favors was signed to start opposite Akin Ayodele, but rookie Daryl Smith, a second-round pick, is expected to push for a starting job right away. Even though he played inside at Georgia Tech, the coaches believe Smith will make a smooth transition outside. Another rookie, Jorge Cordova, is a third-round pick from Nevada who is expected to be used as a pass rusher.

Secondary

Grade: C

The defensive backs stepped through a revolving door in Del Rio's first season as coach. Gone are cornerbacks Fernando Bryant and Jason Craft. No returning member of the secondary had more than two interceptions. The starters at corner are Rashean Mathis and Juran Bolden. Mathis, a second-round pick last year, has a chance to be special. He'll draw the opponent's best receiver. Veteran Dewayne Washington was signed as a free agent to compete for a starting job or to provide experience and leadership off the bench.

Strong safety Donovin Darius, the senior member of the group who enters his seventh season, spent an unhappy offseason trying to get out of Jacksonville because he was unhappy with his contract. He was shopped before the draft, but there were no takers. It's too bad, because if Darius is happy, he can still be a terrific player.

Special teams

Grade: C-

The kicking game left a lot to be desired. That's why they drafted Josh Scobee in the fifth round and acquired veteran Jeff Chandler to compete with holdover placekicker Seth Marler, who missed 13 field goals in 2003. Chris Hanson is a competent punter but nothing special. David Allen was a better punt returner (12-yard average) than kickoff returner (20.3). Kickoff coverage was mediocre and punt coverage below average.

MICHAEL MONTES

Marcus Stroud, DT

Management

Grade: B

Vice President of Player Personnel James Harris and Del Rio are remaking the team in their image. It won't be too long before the last vestiges of the Tom Coughlin regime will be nothing more than a memory. Del Rio is tough and hard-nosed, but his organization doesn't resemble a military academy. Harris and Del Rio have a solid working relationship. Owner Wayne Weaver stays out of the way and lets them do their jobs.

Bottom line

If the young receivers produce and Taylor stays healthy for a third consecutive season, the offense should be balanced and provide a lot of big plays with Leftwich calling the signals. If the pass rush improves and the run defense is as awesome as last season, the defense could be even more effective. The Jaguars are on track to be one of the most improved teams in the league.

FINAL GRADE **86**

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS ROSTER

Jack Del Rio, head coach

Ken Anderson, quarterbacks; **Paul Boudreau**, offensive line; **Mike Haluchak**, linebackers; **Ray Hamilton**, defensive line; **Todd Howard**, defensive asst.; **Anthony Lynn**, running backs; **Bill Musgrave**, offensive coordinator; **Alvin Reynolds**, defensive backs; **Alfredo Roberts**, tight ends; **Steve Shafer**, asst. head coach; **Mike Smith**, defensive coord.; **Andy Heck**, off. asst.; **Bob Ligashesky**, special teams asst.; **Pete Rodriguez**, special teams coord.

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
9	Garrard, David	QB	6-1	244	2-14-1978	2	East Carolina
5	Gray, Quinn	QB	6-3	246	5-21-1979	0	Florida A&M
11	Johnson, Doug	QB	6-2	225	10-27-1977	5	Florida
7	Leftwich, Byron	QB	6-5	245	1-14-1980	1	Marshall

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Compton, Mike	G	6-6	310	9-18-1970	11	West Virginia
79	Dean, Konrad	G	6-4	303	6-6-1979	0	Akron
74	Fletcher, Derrick	G	6-6	350	9-9-1975	2	Baylor
67	Manuwai, Vince	G	6-2	312	7-12-1980	1	Hawaii
63	Meester, Brad	C	6-3	300	3-23-1977	4	Northern Iowa
65	Naeole, Chris	G	6-3	317	12-25-1974	7	Colorado
77	Ogden, Marques	T	6-5	312	11-15-1980	0	Howard
72	Pearson, Mike	T	6-7	297	8-22-1980	2	Florida
66	Romberg, Brett	C	6-3	292	10-10-1979	0	Miami (FL)
	Salaam, Ephraim	T	6-7	295	6-19-1976	6	San Diego State
	Williams, Maurice	T	6-5	310	1-26-1979	3	Michigan
60	Williams, Sammy	T	6-5	310	12-14-1974	4	Oklahoma

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
34	Allen, David	RB	5-9	195	2-5-1978	1	Kansas State
44	Edwards, Marc	RB	6-1	249	11-17-1974	7	Notre Dame
45	Fuamatu-Ma'afala, Chris	RB	5-11	254	3-4-1977	6	Utah
	Smith, Joe	RB	6-1	226	8-26-1979	0	Louisiana Tech
28	Taylor, Fred	RB	6-1	234	1-27-1976	6	Florida
22	Toefield, LaBrandon	RB	5-11	232	9-24-1980	1	LSU

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
86	Edwards, Troy	WR	5-10	191	4-7-1977	5	Louisiana Tech
85	Hankton, Cortez	WR	6-1	200	1-20-1981	1	Texas Southern
81	Hatchette, Matthew	WR	6-3	200	5-1-1974	6	Langston (OK)
84	Lewis, Jermaine	WR	5-7	183	10-16-1974	8	Maryland
89	Luzar, Chris	TE	6-7	262	2-12-1979	2	Virginia
17	Redmond, Jimmy	WR	6-1	190	8-18-1977	2	McNeese State
82	Smith, Jimmy	WR	6-1	213	2-9-1969	10	Jackson State
87	Wrighster, George	TE	6-3	260	4-1-1981	1	Oregon
	Yoder, Todd	TE	6-4	250	3-18-1978	4	Vanderbilt
88	Zelenka, Joe	TE	6-3	261	3-9-1976	5	Wake Forest

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
94	Barnes, Lionel	DE	6-5	260	4-19-1976	4	Louisiana-Monroe
58	Douglas, Hugh	DE	6-2	281	8-23-1971	9	Central State
97	Green, Brandon	DE	6-3	264	9-5-1980	0	Rice
98	Henderson, John	DT	6-7	328	1-9-1979	2	Tennessee
96	Leonard, Matt	DT	6-3	301	11-7-1979	1	Stanford
92	Meier, Rob	DT	6-5	293	8-29-1977	4	Washington State
93	Mills, Javor	DE	6-5	271	5-11-1979	1	Auburn
95	Spicer, Paul	DE	6-4	287	8-18-1975	5	Saginaw Valley
99	Stroud, Marcus	DT	6-6	312	6-25-1978	3	Georgia

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
26	Adams, Blue	CB	5-9	182	10-15-1979	1	Cincinnati
21	Bolden, Juran	CB	6-2	207	6-27-1974	6	Mississippi Delta
31	Brown, Chris	CB	6-1	195	5-9-1978	1	UAB
35	Cooper, Deke	S	6-3	215	10-18-1977	2	Notre Dame
20	Darius, Donovin	S	6-1	225	8-12-1975	6	Syracuse
	Grant, Deon	S	6-2	207	3-14-1979	3	Tennessee
27	Mathis, Rashean	S	6-1	200	8-27-1980	1	Bethune-Cookman
42	Mitchell, Anthony	S	6-1	198	12-13-1974	4	Tuskegee
23	Perryman, Ray	S	6-1	204	11-27-1978	2	Northern Arizona
21	Sanders, Lewis	CB	6-1	210	6-22-1978	3	Maryland
41	Sorensen, Nick	S	6-2	205	7-31-1978	3	Virginia Tech
24	Thomas, Kiwaukee	CB	5-11	192	6-19-1977	4	Georgia Southern
	Washington, Dewayne	CB	5-11	195	12-27-1972	10	North Carolina State

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
53	Akbar, Hakim	LB	6-1	212	8-11-1980	2	Washington
51	Ayodele, Akin	LB	6-2	251	9-17-1979	2	Purdue
51	Bullard, Courtland	LB	6-3	240	9-2-1978	2	Ohio State
	Favors, Greg	LB	6-1	242	9-30-1974	6	Mississippi State
50	Gilbert, Tony	LB	6-1	257	10-16-1979	1	Georgia
51	Hendricks, Tommy	LB	6-2	235	10-23-1978	4	Michigan
56	Humphrey, Deon	LB	6-3	240	5-7-1976	3	Florida State
51	McClain, Jimmy	LB	6-1	231	7-23-1980	2	Troy State
54	Peterson, Mike	LB	6-1	230	6-17-1976	5	Florida
57	Tuipala, Joe	LB	6-1	248	9-13-1976	2	San Diego State
52	Westmoreland, Eric	LB	6-1	230	3-11-1977	3	Tennessee

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Chandler, Jeff	K	6-2	218	6-18-1979	2	Florida
2	Hanson, Chris	P	6-2	223	10-25-1976	4	Marshall
6	Marler, Seth	K	6-1	200	3-27-1981	1	Tulane

TOMASSO DEROSA

MICHAEL MONTES

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Byron Leftwich
FB	Marc Edwards
RB	Fred Taylor
LT	Mike Pearson
LG	Vince Manuwai
C	Brad Meester
RG	Chris Naeole
RT	Maurice Williams
TE	Kyle Brady
WR	Jimmy Smith
WR	Reggie Williams

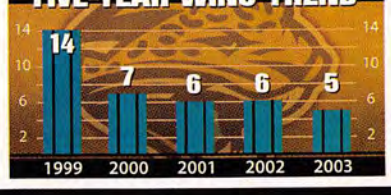
DEFENSE

LDE	Paul Spicer
LDT	Marcus Stroud
RDT	John Henderson
RDE	Hugh Douglas
LLB	Greg Favors
MLB	Mike Peterson
RLB	Akin Ayodele
LCB	Juran Bolden
RCB	Rashean Mathis
SS	Donovin Darius
FS	Deon Grant

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Chris Hanson
K	Seth Marler
PR	David Allen
KR	David Allen

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND



2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	9	Williams, Reggie	WR	6-3	223	5-17-83	Washington
2	7	Smith, Daryl	LB	6-1	234	4-14-82	Georgia Tech
2	23	Jones, Greg	RB	6-1	250	4-4-81	Florida State
3	23	Cordova, Jorge	LB	6-1	241	9-25-81	Nevada
4	22	Maddox, Anthony	DT	6-2	308	11-22-78	Delta State
4	24	Wilford, Ernest	WR	6-3	220	1-14-79	Virginia Tech
5	5	Scobee, Josh	K	6-1	191	6-23-82	Louisiana Tech
5	18	Thompson, Chris	CB	6-1	191	5-19-82	Nicholls State
5	27	Bubin, Sean	T	6-6	306	1-26-81	Illinois
7	48	McCray, Bobby	DE	6-5	252	11-1-81	Florida

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ Buffalo		
Sept. 12	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 2 vs. Denver		
Sept. 19	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 3 @ Tennessee		
Sept. 26	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 4 vs. Indianapolis		
Oct. 3	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 5 @ San Diego		
Oct. 10	4:05	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 6 vs. Kansas City		
Oct. 17	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 7 @ Indianapolis		
Oct. 24	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 8 @ Houston		
Oct. 31	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 9 OPEN DATE		
WEEK 10 vs. Detroit		
Nov. 14	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 11 vs. Tennessee		
Nov. 21	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 12 @ Minnesota		
Nov. 28	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 13 vs. Pittsburgh		
Dec. 5	8:30	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 14 vs. Chicago		
Dec. 12	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 15 @ Green Bay		
Dec. 19	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 16 vs. Houston		
Dec. 26	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 17 @ Oakland		
Jan. 2	4:15	
W / L	Score:	

All times Eastern

HOUSTON TEXANS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 4 2003 RECORD: 5-11

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **DaShon Polk, LB** (BUF)
- **Robaire Smith, DT** (TEN)
- **Todd Wade, OT** (MIA)
- **Mark Bruener, TE** (PIT)

STADIUM FACTS

Reliant Stadium

Capacity: **69,500** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **713-629-3700**
Web site: **www.houstontexans.com**

Avg. Attendance **66,355**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **95.5**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$50.67**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$5.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$6.00 / 21oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.25 / 21oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Houston coach Dom Capers, who also directed the Carolina Panthers from 1995-98, is the first coach in NFL history to guide two expansion teams from their inception.

STAT: Fourth-round choice Domanick Davis rushed for more yards last season (1,031) than the seven running backs selected ahead of him in the 2003 draft combined (648).

LOOK IT UP: Based on the season-ending age of every player who saw action in at least one NFL game in 2003, the Texans were the youngest team in the league with an average age of 26 years, 135 days.

THE COUNT:
-40 – Difference in sacks allowed by Houston, 2003 vs. 2002.
17 – League-high number of Texans placed on the reserve/injured list in 2003.
31 – Houston's NFL rank on both offense and defense last season.

Texans' hopes of bouncing back from injury-plagued 2003 campaign will depend on keeping its Carr out of the shop

Hiring of Pendry as O-line coach should help third-year quarterback

Entering their third season, the Texans are full of optimism. Their growing pains haven't subsided, but they have been severely reduced. A team that has been one of the league's youngest for the last two years can't use youth as an excuse, not in this age of free agency and the salary cap.

Owner Bob McNair has displayed incredible patience, and that's good news for coach Dom Capers and his staff, who have been on an extended honeymoon with fans and media. But this season is time for the Texans to show significant improvement, or the natives will get justifiably restless.

Last season, when injuries ruined the defensive line and disrupted the offense, the Texans struggled on both sides of the ball. The key to the offense is the health of quarterback David Carr, who was sacked less and injured more, and the second-year progress of running back Domanick Davis and receiver Andre Johnson, both of whom made the All-Rookie Team.

PAUL JASIENSKI

Domanick Davis, RB

Offensive line — Grade: B-

Even though they reduced their sack total from a league-high 76 in 2002 to 36 last season, they brought in Joe Pendry as the new line coach. He was Capers' offensive coordinator at Carolina. The pass protection and run blocking improved dramatically last season.

The Texans gave right tackle Todd Wade a $10 million signing bonus to leave Miami. He'll be the only new starter. Left tackle Chester Pitts has started every game his first two seasons. Center Steve McKinney is a top-notch ringleader in the middle. Guards Todd Washington and Zach Wiegert are starters, and there are quality backups available in Milford Brown and Fred Weary. Keep an eye on second-year tackle Seth Wand, who might be a year away from the starting lineup.

Quarterbacks — Grade: C

When Carr was a rookie in 2002, he was sacked an NFL-record 76 times, but he didn't miss a start because of injuries. Last season, Carr was protected like Bank of America, but he was in and out of the lineup because of injuries. He threw nine touchdown passes and 13 interceptions, but was sacked only 15 times.

Carr has to be in the lineup to make the offense go. He's the inspirational team leader with a quick release and a cannon for a right arm. He likes to throw the ball down the field, and management has loaded him up with enough weapons to make the offense explosive and prolific.

Veteran Tony Banks, who threw five touchdown passes and three interceptions before being injured, is a solid backup. Lefty Dave Ragone enters his second season as the third quarterback. Seventh-round pick B.J. Symons, the record-breaker from Texas Tech, will spend his rookie season rehabbing from major knee surgery.

Running backs — Grade: B

When Domanick Davis was drafted as a third-down back and kickoff returner in the fourth round last year, the coaches had no idea

what they had. He missed preseason and the first six games, and when he finally got his chance he made the most of it with 1,031 yards and eight touchdowns. He also caught 47 passes. Offensive coordinator Chris Palmer believes he can be a 1,500-yard rusher.

Tony Hollings, a second-round supplemental pick last year, is finally 100-percent recovered from the knee injury he suffered at Georgia Tech as a junior. He's expected to make a lot of progress in his second season after getting only 38 uneventful carries as a rookie. Getting fullback Jarrod Baxter, a strong blocker, back from injury will be a plus.

Receivers

Grade: C+

Andre Johnson, the third player taken in the 2003 draft, came within 24 yards of 1,000. Combined with Davis, they would have helped the Texans become the first team to have rookies with 1,000 yards rushing and receiving. Johnson, 6-2, 230 pounds, had 66 catches. He's strong and fast, but he still drops too many easy passes.

Jabar Gaffney caught 48 passes in 2002 but only 34 last season. He moves inside to slot receiver when Corey Bradford comes off the bench. Bradford had only 24 catches and four touchdowns. Like Gaffney, Bradford was hampered by Carr being sidelined so often. Tight end Billy Miller, a two-year starter, is the most dependable receiver in clutch situations. Veteran tight end Mark Bruener, who used to be one of the league's best blockers at his position, was signed as a free agent. Bennie Joppru, a second-round pick in 2003, was injured last season. The coaches expect him to make a significant contribution.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	269.1	31
Rushing	103.2	23
Passing	165.9	29
Scoring	255	28
Punt Returns	6.7	29
Kick Returns	21.3	18
Red Zone TD %	61.8	5
Total Defense	380.1	31
Against Rush	148.1	31
Against Pass	232.0	31
Points Allowed	380	27
Interceptions	14	20T
Sacks	19	31
Turnover Diff.	-5	25T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
237	86	127	24

RED ZONE OFFENSE

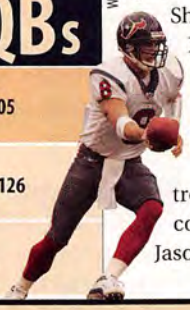
Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
34	180	21	11

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
14	14	1	1

TEXANS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **DAVID CARR**
   Career Passing Yards: **4,605**
   Career TD Passes: **18**
2. **TONY BANKS**
   Career Passing Yards: **15,126**
   Career TD Passes: **76**
3. **MIKE QUINN**
   Career Passing Yards: **20**
   Career TD Passes: **0**



WESLEY HITT

Defensive line

Grade: B

Nose tackle Seth Payne was off to the best start of his career last season before blowing out his knee. Three operations later, he swears he'll be back in the lineup for the opener against San Diego. End Gary Walker, the team's best and most experienced lineman, only played four games because of injuries. He signed a new contract and is healthy and hungry after the bitter taste of last season.

Robaire Smith, who started at tackle in Tennessee's four-man front, signed as a free agent and will play end opposite Walker. End Jerry DeLoach, who hasn't missed a start in two seasons, has been relegated to backup duty. The Texans had so many injuries up front last season that they were playing linemen signed off the street by the end of the year. Having only 19 sacks and surrendering 4.4 yards a carry was skewed because of the injuries.

Linebackers

Grade: C+

In the 3-4 that defensive coordinator Vic Fangio uses, linebackers have to be the strength. The linemen are supposed to tie up blockers to free up linebackers to make the tackles. The outside linebackers are supposed to be the best pass rushers. Three of the linebackers—Jamie Sharper and Jay Foreman on the inside and Kailee Wong on the outside—can play the run. But Wong, who's more suited for the inside, hasn't provided the kind of fearsome pass rush the coaches want.

The other outside spot has been troublesome. Veteran Charlie Clemons could lose his job to late first-rounder Jason Babin or Antwan Peek, a rookie last

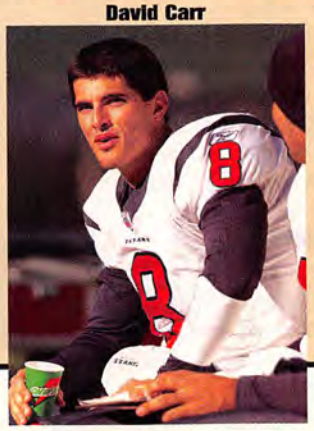
Can Carr drive Texans to a breakout season?

From the moment he was drafted with the top overall pick in the 2002 draft, David Carr has been the public face of the Houston Texans.

Unfortunately for the Texans, that handsome face has often worn a grimace. Carr battled ankle and shoulder injuries last season, missing four games. That experience followed a rookie campaign in which he endured a league-record 76 sacks.

But as the Texans enter Year Three, there's reason to believe Carr could become the next breakout quarterback star. The offensive line cut his sack total in half last season and should be further improved with the addition of former Dolphin Todd Wade at right tackle. Running back Domanick Davis has provided a potent ground attack, recording the franchise's first 100-yard game and 1,000-yard season as a rookie. Wide receiver Andre Johnson, as expected, emerged as a deep threat. When healthy, Carr showed noticeable improvement, from his improved scrambling to throwing the ball away to avoid sacks.

David Carr



DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

"He's a much better quarterback now," Indianapolis Colts defensive end Dwight Freeney says. "He's making much better decisions. He's not holding the ball as much and he's scrambling a lot more."

Though the Texans' record improved by only one victory over their inaugural season, the club was noticeably more competitive in 2003. Houston defeated Carolina, the NFC champion, 14-10, and battled New England into overtime before losing 23-20.

Along the way, Carr emerged as a steady leader, completing 56.6 percent of his passes and generally living up to the Texas-sized expectations he has faced. It has helped that management has never wavered in its faith in the youngster. Even with Drew Henson suddenly available after giving up baseball, the Texans never thought of keeping the former Michigan star around as a possible challenger.

Henson, after all, was once projected as the Texans' No.1 pick in 2002. That was before Carr strengthened his stock as a senior at Fresno State and Henson opted to play for the New York Yankees.

At 25, Carr is young by NFL quarterback standards. But he came into the league a husband and a father, seemingly mature beyond his years. Two years later, he seems like a veteran cornerstone.

—Pete Williams

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 5, Lost 11

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	21-20	at Miami
09/14	L	31-10	at New Orleans
09/21	L	42-14	Kansas City
09/28	W	24-20	Jacksonville
10/12	L	38-17	at Tennessee
10/19	L	19-14	New York Jets
10/26	L	30-21	at Indianapolis
11/02	W	14-10	Carolina
11/09	L	34-27	at Cincinnati
11/16	W	12-10	at Buffalo
11/23	L	23-20 (OT)	New England
11/30	W	17-13	Atlanta
12/07	L	27-0	at Jacksonville
12/14	L	16-3	at Tampa Bay
12/21	L	27-24	Tennessee
12/28	L	20-17	Indianapolis

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
D. Davis	238	1031	4.3	51	8
Mack	93	253	2.7	13	4
Carr	27	151	5.6	36	2
Hollings	38	102	2.7	17	0
Ragone	6	51	8.5	14	0
Banks	6	27	4.5	13	0
Wells	5	14	2.8	10	0
Gaffney	1	13	13.0	13	0
Stanley	1	12	12.0	12	0
Simmons	1	7	7.0	7	0
Johnson	5	-10	-2.0	11	0
Texans	**421**	**1651**	**3.9**	**51**	**14**
Opponents	**533**	**2370**	**4.4**	**64**	**15**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Johnson	66	976	14.8	46t	4
D. Davis	47	351	7.5	17	0
Miller	40	355	8.9	25	3
Gaffney	34	402	11.8	33	2
Bradford	24	460	19.2	78t	4
Mack	9	55	6.1	10	0
Holloway	8	84	10.5	33	0
Armstrong	7	75	10.7	18	1
Norris	7	40	5.7	11	0
Hollings	2	25	12.5	19	0
Wells	2	17	8.5	12	0
Coleman	1	6	6.0	6	0
Ragone	1	-5	-5.0	-5	0
Texans	**248**	**2841**	**11.5**	**78t**	**14**
Opponents	**297**	**3835**	**12.9**	**84t**	**22**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Carr	295	167	2013	9	13
Banks	102	61	693	5	3
Ragone	40	20	135	0	1
Mack	1	0	0	0	1
Texans	**439**	**248**	**2841**	**14**	**18**
Opponents	**502**	**297**	**3835**	**22**	**14**

SACKS

Sharper 4.0, Wong 3.0, Foreman 2.0, Orr 2.0, Clemons 1.0, Foley 1.0, S. Martin 1.0, Payne 1.0, Peek 1.0, Sears 1.0, Wright 1.0, E. Brown 0.5, Ioane 0.5

Texans 19.0, Opponents 36.0

t=touchdown

Jamie Sharper, LB

MICHAEL MONTES

season. In 2005, Babin and Peek will probably start on the outside, while Wong will probably be moved inside. In the meantime, they've got to get more pressure on the passer from the linebackers.

Secondary

Grade: B

Cornerback Aaron Glenn is healthy as he enters his 11th season. After making the Pro Bowl in 2002, he was limited to one interception because of injuries last year. His counterpart, Marcus Coleman, had seven interceptions and played better than at any time during his eight seasons. The coaches want to move Coleman to free safety, which frees up a starting spot for Dunta Robinson, the No. 1 pick (10th overall) from South Carolina who should start immediately.

Eric Brown starts his third season as the strong safety, and he's effective in this system which allows him to make plays around the line of scrimmage. In a division with quarterbacks who throw to multiple receivers, a defense can't have too many cornerbacks. If free safety Marlon McCree solidifies free safety, Coleman could return to corner. Glenn Earl, a fourth-round pick from Notre Dame coming off major knee surgery, is a 222-pound safety who should help special teams this season and start in 2005.

Special teams

Grade: B

This is a strong area. Kicker Kris Brown and punter Chad Stanley enter their third seasons with the Texans. Stanley spent a lot of time on the job because the offense has had problems with consistency. He had 36 kicks downed inside the 20 and only three touchbacks. Brown and Stanley are first-rate. Rookie cornerback Vontez Duff, a sixth-round pick from Notre Dame, should beat out third-year receiver J.J. Moses for the punt-return job. Moses was dangerous on kickoffs but terrible on punts. The Texans are better at punt coverage than kickoff coverage.

Management

Grade: B

Vice President/General Manager Charley Casserly and Capers work well together. Both have familiar faces around them. Casserly has a personnel department loaded with former Washington Redskins. Capers has a coaching staff with a lot of former Carolina Panthers. Owner Bob McNair keeps an eye on everything, but he allows the people he hires to do their jobs.

Bottom line

At best, the Texans will take another step in the right direction and be capable of finishing 8-8, which would be a three-game improvement. It's difficult to imagine them taking a step backward and finishing worse than last season's 5-11. Realistically, they won't be a genuine playoff contender this season, but that's a realistic goal for 2005.

TEXANS ROSTER

Dom Capers, head coach

Kippy Brown, wide receivers; **Vic Fangio**, defensive coordinator; **Chris Palmer**, off. coord.; **Todd Grantham**, defensive line; **Chick Harris**, running backs; **Tom Olivadotti**, linebackers; **Jon Hoke**, defensive backs; **Joe Marciano**, special teams coord.; **Tony Marciano**, TEs; **Steve Marshall**, offensive line; **Joe Pendry**, offensive line; **Greg Roman**, QBs; **Tony Oden**, asst. defensive backs; **Eric Sutulovich**, asst. special teams;

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Banks, Tony	QB	6-4	230	4-5-1973	7	Michigan State
8	Carr, David	QB	6-3	223	7-21-1979	2	Fresno State
4	Ragone, Dave	QB	6-3	245	10-3-1979	1	Louisville

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
67	Brown, Milford	G	6-4	320	8-15-1980	1	Florida State
60	Dawson, Curry	T	6-6	290	8-4-1979	0	Angelo State
73	Jones, Garrick	T	6-5	306	12-2-1978	0	Arkansas State
76	McKinney, Steve	C	6-4	295	10-15-1975	6	Texas A&M
48	Pittman, Bryan	C	6-4	255	1-20-1977	1	Washington
69	Pitts, Chester	G	6-4	320	6-26-1979	2	San Diego State
74	Powell, Jamal	C	6-3	311	4-10-1981	0	TCU
68	Silvers, Elliot	T	6-7	320	2-19-1978	1	Washington
71	Wade, Todd	T	6-8	315	10-30-1976	4	Mississippi
78	Wand, Seth	T	6-7	327	8-6-1979	1	Northwest Missouri St.
77	Washington, Todd	C	6-3	310	9-19-1976	6	Virginia Tech
61	Weary, Fred	G	6-4	308	9-30-1977	2	Tennessee
72	Wiegert, Zach	T	6-5	309	8-16-1972	9	Nebraska

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
37	Davis, Domanick	RB	5-9	216	10-1-1980	1	LSU
25	Hollings, Tony	RB	5-10	216	12-1-1981	1	Georgia Tech
44	Norris, Moran	RB	6-1	250	6-16-1978	3	Kansas
40	Stansbury, Ed	RB	6-1	257	5-3-1979	1	UCLA
34	Stephens, Travis	RB	5-8	194	6-26-1978	1	Tennessee
32	Wells, Jonathan	RB	6-1	243	7-21-1979	2	Ohio State

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
87	Armstrong, Derick	WR	6-2	196	4-2-1979	1	Arkansas-Monticello
85	Bradford, Corey	WR	6-1	197	12-08-1975	6	Jackson State
	Bruener, Mark	TE	6-4	260	9-16-1972	9	Washington
85	Charles, Terry	WR	6-3	207	7-8-1979	0	Portland State
81	Dugans, Ron	WR	6-2	205	4-27-1977	3	Florida State
86	Gaffney, Jabar	WR	6-1	193	12-1-1980	2	Florida
89	Holloway, Jabari	TE	6-2	260	12-18-1978	2	Notre Dame
89	Johnson, Albert	WR	5-9	190	11-11-1977	2	Southern Methodist
80	Johnson, Andre	WR	6-2	230	7-11-1981	1	Miami (FL)
83	Joppru, Bennie	TE	6-4	262	1-5-1980	0	Michigan
88	Kent, Rashod	TE	6-6	275	6-7-1980	1	Rutgers
82	Miller, Billy	TE	6-3	230	4-24-1977	4	Southern California
84	Moses, J.J.	WR	5-6	178	9-12-1979	2	Iowa State
81	Murphy, Matt	TE	6-5	260	2-23-1980	2	Maryland
18	Taylor, Chris	WR	5-10	183	4-25-1979	0	Texas A&M

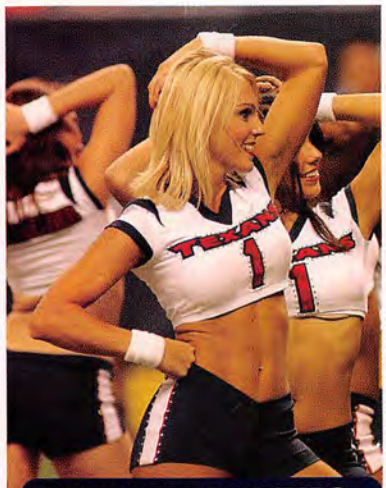
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
97	Davis, Jason	DE	6-3	290	5-12-1980	0	West Virginia
95	DeLoach, Jerry	DE	6-2	315	7-17-1977	3	California
91	Dunn, Anthony	DE	6-2	255	7-1-1980	1	Northern Colorado
94	Ioane, Junior	DT	6-4	320	7-21-1977	3	Arizona State
90	Martin, Terrance	DE	6-2	290	7-6-1979	1	North Carolina State
91	Payne, Seth	DT	6-4	303	2-12-1975	7	Cornell
92	Sears, Corey	DE	6-3	319	4-15-1973	5	Mississippi State
79	Slechta, Jeremy	DT	6-6	285	5-12-1980	2	Nebraska
98	Smith, Robaire	DT	6-4	310	11-15-1977	4	Michigan State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
33	Bell, Jason	CB	6-1	182	4-1-1978	3	UCLA
24	Brown, Eric	S	6-1	210	3-20-1975	6	Mississippi State
22	Burns, Curry	S	6-1	216	2-12-1981	1	Louisville
42	Coleman, Marcus	CB	6-2	210	5-24-1974	8	Texas Tech
28	Dennis, Pat	CB	6-1	203	6-30-1978	3	Louisiana-Monroe
38	Faggins, DeMarcus	CB	5-10	178	6-13-1979	2	Kansas State
20	Freeman, Robert	CB	5-9	182	8-28-1981	0	Clark Atlanta
31	Glenn, Aaron	CB	5-9	185	7-16-1972	10	Texas A&M
29	McCree, Marlon	S	5-11	196	3-17-1977	3	Kentucky
30	Simmons, Jason	CB	5-9	198	3-30-1976	6	Arizona State
21	Vaughn, Darrick	CB	5-11	193	10-2-1978	3	Southwest Texas State
41	Walker, Ramon	S	6-1	197	11-8-1979	2	Pittsburgh
43	Wright, Kenny	CB	6-1	205	9-14-1977	5	Northwestern State

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Bell, Marcus	LB	6-1	245	7-19-1977	3	Arizona
59	Carroll, Travis	LB	6-4	240	10-26-1978	2	Florida
50	Clemons, Charlie	LB	6-2	250	7-4-1972	6	Georgia
54	Evans, Troy	LB	6-3	243	12-3-1977	2	Cincinnati
56	Foreman, Jay	LB	6-1	240	2-18-1976	5	Nebraska
53	Orr, Shantee	LB	6-1	250	5-28-1981	1	Michigan
98	Peek, Antwan	LB	6-1	230	10-29-1979	1	Cincinnati
	Polk, DaShon	LB	6-2	242	3-13-1977	4	Arizona
55	Sharper, Jamie	LB	6-3	240	11-23-1974	7	Virginia
52	Wong, Kailee	LB	6-2	250	5-23-1976	6	Stanford

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Brown, Kris	K	5-11	206	12-23-1976	5	Nebraska
7	Stanley, Chad	P	6-3	205	1-29-1976	5	Stephen F. Austin

DAVID GONZALES/ ICON SMI



THOMAS B. SHEA/ICON SMI

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	David Carr
FB	Moran Norris
RB	Domanick Davis
LT	Chester Pitts
LG	Todd Washington
C	Steve McKinney
RG	Zach Wiegert
RT	Todd Wade
TE	Billy Miller
WR	Andre Johnson
WR	Jabar Gaffney

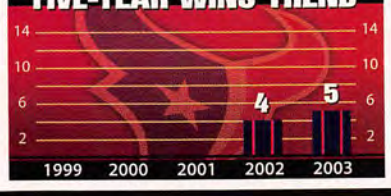
DEFENSE

LE	Gary Walker
NT	Seth Payne
RE	Robaire Smith
OLB	Kailee Wong
ILB	Jay Foreman
ILB	Jamie Sharper
OLB	Jason Babin
LCB	Aaron Glenn
RCB	Dunta Robinson
SS	Eric Brown
FS	Marcus Coleman

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Chad Stanley
K	Kris Brown
PR	Vontez Duff
KR	J.J. Moses

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND



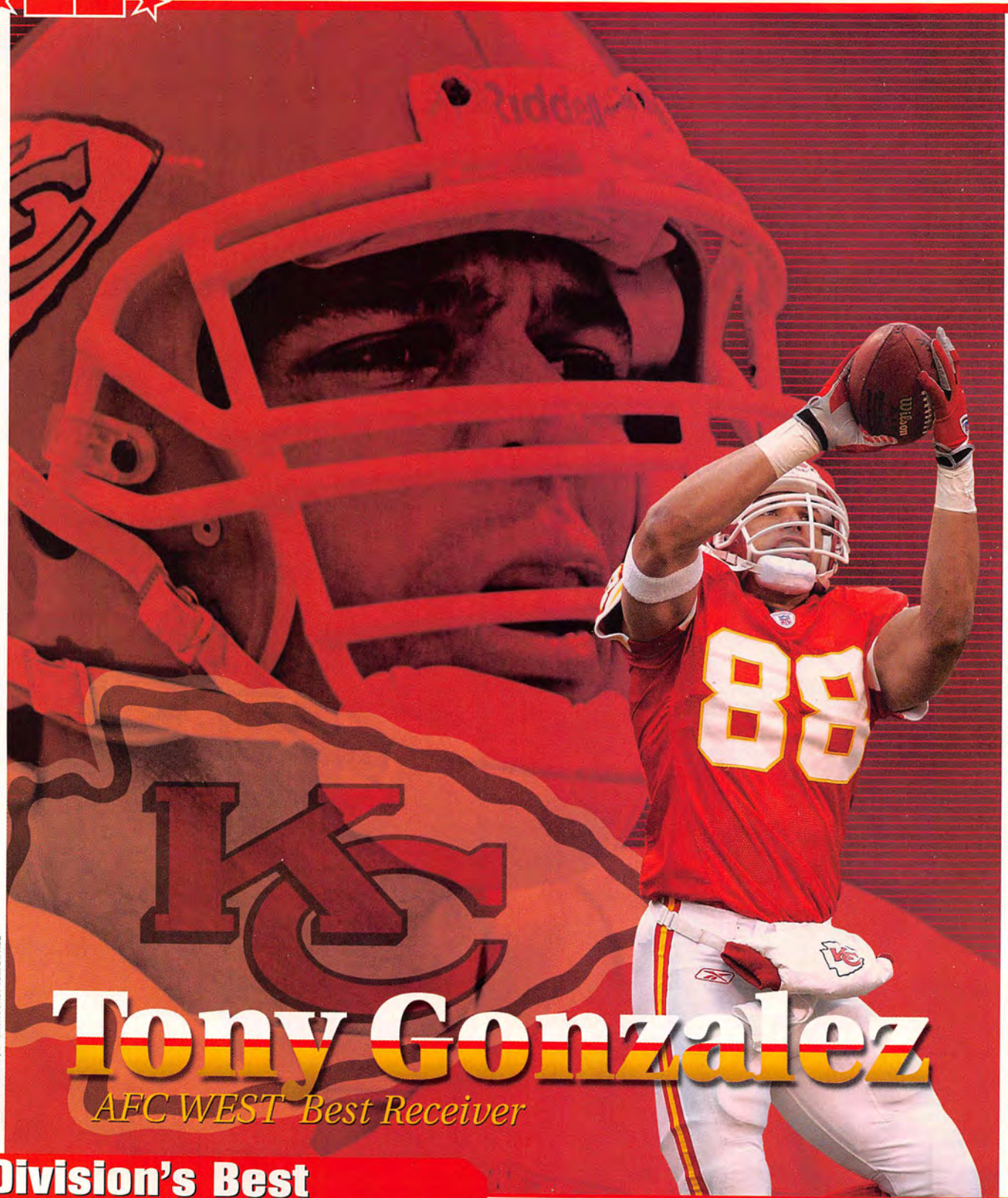
SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. San Diego	
Sept. 12	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 2 @ Detroit	
Sept. 19	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 3 @ Kansas City	
Sept. 26	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 4 vs. Oakland	
Oct. 3	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 5 vs. Minnesota	
Oct. 10	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 6 @ Tennessee	
Oct. 17	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 7 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 8 vs. Jacksonville	
Oct. 31	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 9 @ Denver	
Nov. 7	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 10 @ Indianapolis	
Nov. 14	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 11 vs. Green Bay	
Nov. 21	9:30
W/L	Score:
WEEK 12 vs. Tennessee	
Nov. 28	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 13 @ New York Jets	
Dec. 5	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 14 vs. Indianapolis	
Dec. 12	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 15 @ Chicago	
Dec. 19	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 16 @ Jacksonville	
Dec. 26	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 17 vs. Cleveland	
Jan. 2	1:00
W/L	Score:

All times Eastern

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	10	Robinson, Dunta	CB	5-10	186	4-11-82	South Carolina
1	27	Babin, Jason	DE	6-2	260	5-24-80	Western Michigan
4	26	Earl, Glenn	S	6-1	222	6-10-81	Notre Dame
6	5	Duff, Vontez	CB	5-10	203	3-8-82	Notre Dame
6	10	Lord, Jammal	S	6-2	220	1-10-81	Nebraska
6	35	Anderson, Charlie	LB	6-4	240	12-8-81	Mississippi
7	9	Orr, Raheem	DE	6-4	260	11-8-82	Rutgers
7	10	Thomas, Sloan	WR	6-1	203	12-22-81	Texas
7	47	Symons, B.J.	QB	6-1	210	11-19-80	Texas Tech



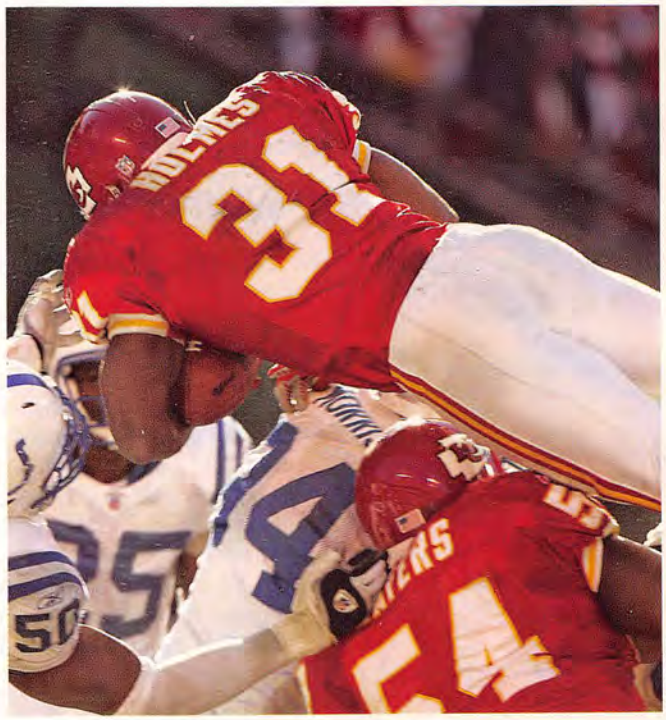
Tony Gonzalez

AFC WEST Best Receiver

TOMASSO DEROSA; BACKGROUND: TOM DIPACE

Division's Best

BIG-GAME PLAYER	RUSHER	RECEIVER	TACKLER	SPECIAL-TEAMS WARRIOR
John Lynch, S **Denver** The consummate prepared pro when the pressure is on.	**LaDainian Tomlinson, RB** **San Diego** Narrowly over Priest Holmes. What L.T. does while playing for a terrible team borders on the astounding.	**Tony Gonzalez, TE** **Kansas City** He's money around the goal line, a receiver masquerading downfield as a tight end.	**Al Wilson, LB** **Denver** Plugs the middle for a Broncos defense that looked better on paper than on the field at the end of last season.	**Dante Hall, WR-KR** **Kansas City** Four TDs on returns last year had veterans so fired up they volunteered to play on specials with him.



Priest Holmes and the Chiefs are hoping to take that final leap into the Super Bowl.

Cunningham's impact on Chiefs' defense may be difference in what's certain to be a two-team race

By Larry Weisman, USA Today

There's no middle class in the AFC West. There are haves and have-nots. There are the well-stocked and the indigent. Put Kansas City and Denver in the first category. Both playoff teams last season, they're prepared to make a run in 2004 for the Super Bowl. The Chiefs essentially return the same team, while the Broncos feverishly remade their roster.

Stick Oakland and San Diego in the lower half of the draw, the Raiders quite a bit less so than the hapless, hopeless Chargers. The Raiders, a year removed from the Super Bowl, have a new coach and an assortment of new bodies. They certainly need a new attitude. The Chargers dumped players, signed no-names and consigned themselves to yet another miserable year of defeats.

1. KANSAS CITY CHIEFS page 98

The Chiefs looked as if they might break Miami's seemingly unassailable record of 17 wins without a defeat before their defense simply pooped out. The turnovers stopped coming and the Chiefs couldn't stop anyone. Their major acquisition in the offseason, then, may well have been Gunther Cunningham, their longtime defensive coordinator and the head coach who preceded Dick Vermeil. He rejoined the club from Tennessee.

He'll make a difference. These defensive players, many acquired on his watch, fit his scheme and like his aggression. This unit ought to be able to climb into the top 20.

2. DENVER BRONCOS page 102

The Broncos made a number of bold moves, foremost of which was dealing Clinton Portis for Champ Bailey. That deal grabbed most of the headlines (and Washington's second-round pick as well). For every hole Mike Shanahan spied, he came up with a patch. Denver's defense let down late last season, especially in the playoffs, and that's where Bailey, a shutdown corner, and free-agent safety John Lynch, a battle-tested warrior, come in.

3. OAKLAND RAIDERS page 106

Norv Turner's emergence after a stealth candidacy gives the Raiders their third head coach in four seasons. Such instability is not a hallmark of the Silver & Black, but Bill Callahan managed to lose his team early last season and the ensuing mutiny and disrespect was awful to watch. Turner has to hope Rich Gannon is healthy and that AARP hasn't sent membership cards to Jerry Rice and Tim Brown. The defense must improve, too.

4. SAN DIEGO CHARGERS page 110

Anyone who understands what the Chargers are doing should report to their front office immediately and help write the mission statement. The idea that Marty Schottenheimer should be entrusted with a young quarterback is ludicrous on the face of it. And yet the Chargers never chased a veteran in free agency. Think back on Schottenheimer's better teams in Kansas City—Warren Moon, Steve DeBerg, Joe Montana. No beardless youths there. A bad defense goes to a 3-4 alignment under new coordinator Wade Phillips, who had success for one year in Atlanta and then a disaster in 2004. The parts don't seem like a good fit.

Kansas City won a couple of close ones from the Broncos last year. These two are the contenders for the division title and possibly home-field advantage in the AFC playoff draw. Mark the date of their two meetings. Those are the ones that really count in the AFC West's two-team race.

TEAMMATE	SENSE OF HUMOR	INTELLECT	SIDELINE STRATEGIST	FRONT-OFFICE EXECUTIVE
Rod Smith, WR Denver	**Morten Andersen, PK Kansas City**	**Tim Brown, WR Raiders**	**Al Saunders, off. coord. Kansas City**	**Carl Peterson, president Kansas City**
The veteran receiver keeps setting an example and will need to do even more with so many roster changes.	Proving once again there is nothing like a Dane.	Had he been a bit more media-friendly, the Oakland receiver's career statistics would seem gaudier.	Kansas City's offensive coordinator loves to attack and disproves the adage that patience is a virtue.	The Chiefs' chief always has his team at the edge of the Super Bowl.

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 1 2003 RECORD: 13-3

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Chris Bober, C** (NYG)
- **Lional Dalton, DT** (WAS)
- **John Welbourn, OG** (trade, PHI)

STADIUM FACTS

Arrowhead Stadium

Capacity: **79,451** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **816-920-9400**
Web site: **www.kcchiefs.com**

Avg. Attendance **78,480**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **98.8**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$58.40**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$18.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$3.75 / 14oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.25 / 14oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Morten Andersen has appeared in 338 games in his NFL career. He is just two games shy of the NFL record, currently held by Hall-of-Famer George Blanda.

STAT: Dante Hall's 11 career touchdowns have come from an average of 79.8 yards, the longest in NFL history (minimum 10 TDs).

LOOK IT UP: Dick Vermeil is the only coach to lead teams to victories in both the Super Bowl (St. Louis Rams) and the Rose Bowl (UCLA).

THE COUNT:

54.0 – Percentage of first-down plays gaining four-plus yards in 2003, tops in the NFL.

+152 – Chiefs' NFL-best scoring differential last season.

6-0 – K.C. record when Dante Hall returns a punt or kickoff for a TD.

With Chiefs' defense now under the Gun(ther), Vermeil has shot at third different Super Bowl team

Green, Holmes, Gonzalez back to lead always-potent offense

A snapshot from training camp last year: Defensive coordinator Greg Robinson declines an interview request, with a team spokesman saying he's tired of talking about the club's poor defensive showing of the previous year.

Tired of it three days into camp?

Well, he's gone now after the problems lingered through extensive personnel upgrades. Former Chiefs head coach Gunther Cunningham returns to replace Robinson, promising a more aggressive and attacking approach that the team sorely needs. The Chiefs rode their productive offense to a 9-0 start and seemed Super Bowl-bound until the turnovers stopped coming for the defense and all of its holes were exposed. That's going to be the focus of this team going forward—revitalizing a unit that ranked 29th last year and dead last the previous season.

Offensive line

Grade: A

This unit is maybe the NFL's best, even after losing right tackle John Tait to Chicago. Lots of individual talent plus a great sense of groupthink equals chemistry. This line is strong from the inside out, with heady center Casey Wiegmann the most overlooked. Guards Will Shields and Brian Waters fit the running attack beautifully, as does Wiegmann, who often pulls and leads. Left tackle William Roaf is massive and has rebuilt his career with the Chiefs. Free-agent pickup Chris Bober, who spent most of his time with the New York Giants at center, could start in Tait's old spot. So could John Welbourn, acquired from Philadelphia.

Priest Holmes, RB

ROBERT LEITER

The club might be wise to begin grooming replacements from some of the older starters, which would include Roaf and Shields.

Quarterbacks

Grade: A-

Trent Green comes off perhaps his best season and no longer seems to feel obligated to prove himself with every throw. And it's not like he has the NFL's best group of receivers here, though Tony Gonzalez is certainly a life-saver. Green seems to have full command of this offense now and avoids the dangerous throws. Backup Todd Collins was once a starter in Buffalo, but that seems like it was in another lifetime ago. The Chiefs need to begin thinking about a young player in the No. 3 spot.

Running backs

Grade: A

Priest Holmes could have been shouting "hip, hip, hooray" last year. He regained his form and picked up a nice contract extension after a hip injury knocked him out at the end of the 2002 season. Holmes' 27 rushing touchdowns set an NFL record and he caught 74 passes to go with his 1,420 rushing yards. He's tough to tackle and always fights for the extra yard.

Larry Johnson, the team's No. 1 pick a year ago, showed no affinity for this offensive scheme and played very little. Tony Richardson belongs in any discussion of the top three fullbacks in the game. He's a fine blocker, decent receiver and good runner in short-yardage situations.

Receivers

Grade: B-

If this offense has a weakness, it's here. The Chiefs lack a real go-getter, a receiver who stretches coverages and provides a consistent deep threat. They didn't get a highly touted one in the draft and neither Johnnie Morton nor Eddie Kennison is that player. Morton struggled badly with drops last season. So did Marc Boerigter, the Canadian import who regressed badly. Tops among the pass catchers are tight end Gonzalez, a perennial Pro Bowler, and Holmes.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	369.4	2
Rushing	120.6	15
Passing	248.8	2
Scoring	484	1
Punt Returns	16.4	1
Kick Returns	25.4	1
Red Zone TD %	77.8	1
Total Defense	356.7	29
Against Rush	146.5	30
Against Pass	210.2	20
Points Allowed	332	19
Interceptions	25	3
Sacks	36	22
Turnover Diff.	+19	1

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
348	120	201	27

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
54	324	42	11

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
32	24	7	3

CHIEFS' BEST-EVER QBs

BETTMANN/CORBIS

1. **LEN DAWSON**
   Career Passing Yards: **28,711**
   Career TD Passes: **239**
2. **TRENT GREEN**
   Career Passing Yards: **17,016**
   Career TD Passes: **106**
3. **BILL KENNEY**
   Career Passing Yards: **17,277**
   Career TD Passes: **105**

Defensive line

Grade: B+

The Chiefs moved quickly to re-sign left end Eric Hicks, who was at his most productive when Cunningham ran the defense. The staff expects him to get back to double digits in sacks now that he'll be comfortable again in a Cunningham scheme, lining up on the outside shoulder of the offensive tackle. Nose tackle Ryan Sims must bull his neck and eat up blockers against the run. Vonnie Holliday is solid if not spectacular at right end. The whole group needs to be more aggressive.

Linebackers

Grade: B-

This group is better on paper than on the field. It slumped badly when middle linebacker Mike Maslowski went out late with an injury. He's heady and well-suited to the middle. Scott Fujita, on the strongside, played his best early in the season. He needs to sustain that level throughout. Shawn Barber goes into his second year on the weakside. He's got good range and covers well but seems to be missing more and more tackles. A more active front four will help these guys.

Secondary

Grade: B-

This group will improve simply because they are the type of players Cunningham favors. He likes big players

Chiefs expect familiar hired 'Gun' to make big difference with disappointing defense

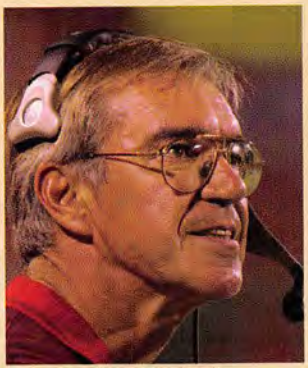
In an offseason that featured the surprise return of Joe Gibbs to the helm of the Washington Redskins, no back-to-the-future hiring seemed more unlikely than the Kansas City Chiefs bringing back Gunther Cunningham as defensive coordinator.

After all, the Chiefs had fired Cunningham as head coach in January 2001. Cunningham, not surprisingly, left angry because the Chiefs had hired Dick Vermeil before letting him go. Cunningham learned of his dismissal by reading about it.

Rarely does a former head coach return to his former employer. The only similar precedent in recent years was when Ted Marchibroda rejoined the Colts as head coach in 1992, 13 years after his firing in Baltimore and years after the team moved to Indianapolis.

"It is the most unusual turn of events that I've been a part of in my professional life," says Cunningham. "Usually things like that are dreamed about. It's not real. The chances of it happening are slim and none."

It happened because of the ego-free personalities of Cunningham and Vermeil, and because the Chiefs—for all of their success last season—desperately needed to upgrade a defense that ranked dead last and 29th in yards allowed, respectively, over the past two seasons under former coordinator Greg Robinson.



Gunther Cunningham

Before Cunningham, nicknamed "Gun," was hired as the Chiefs' head coach in 1999, he spent four seasons as the team's defensive coordinator, guiding blitzing, physically imposing squads that led the league in scoring defense in 1995 and 1997.

Cunningham, who recently spent three seasons as Tennessee's assistant head coach, favors a 4-3 set that relies on putting pressure on the passer and man-to-man coverage on the corners. Robinson ran a 4-3 but preferred zone blitzing along with a mix of man and zone coverage in the secondary.

The schemes are similar enough to allow for an easy transition but different enough so that Vermeil, a self-described offensive coach, can reasonably expect significant improvement in '04.

After all, he has an old hired "Gun" back in place.

—Pete Williams

CLIFF SCHIAPPA/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 13, Lost 3

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	27-14	San Diego
09/14	W	41-20	Pittsburgh
09/21	W	42-14	at Houston
09/28	W	17-10	at Baltimore
10/05	W	24-23	Denver
10/12	W	40-34 (OT)	at Green Bay
10/20	W	17-10	at Oakland
10/26	W	38-5	Buffalo
11/09	W	41-20	Cleveland
11/16	L	24-19	at Cincinnati
11/23	W	27-24	Oakland
11/30	W	28-24	at San Diego
12/07	L	45-27	at Denver
12/14	W	45-17	Detroit
12/20	L	45-20	at Minnesota
12/28	W	31-3	Chicago

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Holmes	320	1420	4.4	31t	27
Blaylock	22	112	5.1	25t	2
Morton	8	94	11.8	39	0
L. Johnson	20	85	4.3	15	1
Green	26	83	3.2	14	2
Hall	16	73	4.6	16	0
Richardson	24	60	2.5	8	0
Kennison	2	9	4.5	5	0
Collins	8	-7	-0.9	0	0
Chiefs	**446**	**1929**	**4.3**	**39**	**32**
Opponents	**453**	**2344**	**5.2**	**65t**	**18**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Holmes	74	690	9.3	36	0
Gonzalez	71	916	12.9	67	10
Kennison	56	853	15.2	51t	5
Morton	50	740	14.8	50	4
Hall	40	423	10.6	67t	1
Blaylock	15	181	12.1	63t	1
Richardson	12	76	6.3	14	0
Boerigter	11	158	14.4	30	0
Dunn	5	35	7.0	15	3
Easy	3	19	6.3	8	0
Baber	1	20	20.0	20	0
L. Johnson	1	2	2.0	2	0
Chiefs	**339**	**4113**	**12.1**	**67t**	**24**
Opponents	**332**	**3614**	**10.9**	**77t**	**19**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Green	523	330	4039	24	12
Collins	12	9	74	0	0
Holmes	1	0	0	0	0
Hall	0	0	0	0	0
Chiefs	**536**	**339**	**4113**	**24**	**12**
Opponents	**565**	**332**	**3614**	**19**	**25**

SACKS

Holliday 5.5, Barber 5.0, Hicks 5.0, Truluck 5.0, Fujita 4.0, Sims 3.0, Stills 3.0, Wesley 2.0, Beisel 1.0, Sharpe 1.0, Warfield 1.0, Browning 0.5

Chiefs 36.0, Opponents 21.0

t=touchdown

Dante Hall, WR

back there, and free safety Jerome Woods and nickel cornerback William Bartee fit that bill. Strong safety Greg Wesley is an explosive hitter. Cornerback Dexter McCleon, acquired as a free agent a year ago, proved solid in coverage. There's some talent back here but the old scheme didn't play to it. Neither Bartee nor incumbent starter Eric Warfield may be the answer at left corner.

Special teams

Grade: A-

Dante Hall presents as potent a threat as any single player, scoring four times last season on returns. He changes the way opponents think about their kickoffs and their punts and helps the Chiefs get great field position. Kicker Morten Andersen swears he'll play until he's 50 (he's 43) but his age has become the upper reach of the distance he can kick. He missed only four field goals and they were all from 40 or longer, including one over 50. He'll get a run in training camp from Lawrence Tynes. The Chiefs do a solid job of covering kicks. Hall steals the show.

Management

Grade: A-

Chiefs President Carl Peterson and coach Dick Vermeil hoped that the third year of their reunion tour would take them to the Super Bowl. When it did not, Vermeil asked to stay on. It is always a pleasure to see these two old friends at work on their team.

The Chiefs understand the limits of the salary cap and don't do ridiculous deals, though their payroll tends to bump right up against the cap's upper limit. They'd have preferred not to lose Tait, but the structure of the deal made it impossible for them to match the Bears' offer.

The club burned a year by keeping Robinson as defensive coordinator because of Vermeil's deep loyalty. Their defensive failures have not been the result of a lack of effort.

Bottom line

A flawed defense hid its weaknesses beneath a raft of turnovers in the early part of last season but ultimately was exposed. Bringing back Cunningham was a good move and should at least allow the club to play schemes more suited to the talent, some of which Cunningham helped acquire in his previous tenure as defensive coordinator and head coach. The offense seems primed to keep rolling and Green is at his peak. The Chiefs are not so old that they'll need to be taken apart if they fail to reach the Super Bowl this year—but the clock is certainly ticking for Vermeil.

FINAL GRADE **90**

CHIEFS ROSTER

Dick Vermeil, head coach

Vernon Dean, asst. defensive backs; **Irv Eatman,** asst. off. line; **Al Saunders,** off. coord.; **Frank Gansz, Jr.,** special teams; **Peter Giunta,** def. backs; **Carl Hairston,** def. line; **Charlie Joiner,** receivers; **Bob Karmelowicz,** def. line; **Gunther Cunningham,** defensive coord., **Keith Rowen,** tight ends; **James Saxon,** running backs; **Mike Solari,** off. line; **Jason Verduzco,** QBs; **Fred Pagac,** linebackers; **Darvin Wallis,** defensive asst.-quality control; **Chad O'Shea,** asst. special teams; **Bob Saunders,** off. asst.

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Burford, Seth	QB	6-3	241	3-11-1979	0	Cal Poly
15	Collins, Todd	QB	6-4	225	11-5-1971	6	Michigan
	Farmer, Kirk	QB	6-5	218	8-27-1979	0	Missouri
10	Green, Trent	QB	6-3	217	7-9-1970	6	Indiana

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
69	Allotey, Victor	G	6-3	330	4-8-1975	0	Indiana
65	Black, Jordan	G	6-5	314	1-28-1980	0	Notre Dame
67	Bober, Chris	C	6-5	310	12-24-1976	3	Nebraska-Omaha
77	Roaf, Willie	T	6-5	320	4-18-1970	11	Louisiana Tech
68	Shields, Will	G	6-3	315	9-15-1971	11	Nebraska
70	Spears, Marcus	T	6-4	320	9-28-1971	8	Northwestern State
54	Waters, Brian	G	6-3	318	2-18-1977	4	North Texas
76	Welbourn, John	G	6-5	318	3-30-1976	5	California
62	Wiegmann, Casey	C	6-2	285	7-20-1973	7	Iowa
74	Williams, Brett	T	6-5	321	5-2-1980	0	Florida State
60	Willis, Donald	G	6-3	325	7-15-1973	5	North Carolina A&T

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
23	Blaylock, Derrick	RB	5-9	205	8-23-1979	2	Stephen F. Austin
43	Easy, Omar	RB	6-1	245	10-29-1977	2	Penn State
31	Holmes, Priest	RB	5-9	213	10-7-1973	7	Texas
34	Johnson, Larry	RB	6-1	228	11-19-1979	1	Penn State
49	Richardson, Tony	RB	6-1	232	12-17-1971	9	Auburn

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
45	Baber, Billy	TE	6-3	255	1-17-1979	3	Virginia
85	Boerigter, Marc	WR	6-3	220	5-4-1978	2	Hastings
11	Douglas, Dameane	WR	6-1	195	3-15-1976	4	California
89	Dunn, Jason	TE	6-6	276	11-15-1973	7	Eastern Kentucky
83	Gammon, Kendall	TE	6-4	255	10-23-1968	12	Pittsburg State
88	Gonzalez, Tony	TE	6-4	248	2-27-1976	7	California
82	Hall, Dante	WR	5-8	187	9-1-1978	4	Texas A&M
82	Haygood, Herb	WR	5-11	193	12-30-1977	1	Michigan State
81	Horn, Chris	WR	5-11	195	7-13-1977	0	Rocky Mountain
87	Kennison, Eddie	WR	6-1	201	1-20-1973	8	LSU
80	Morton, Johnnie	WR	6-1	190	10-7-1971	10	Southern California
84	Ward, LaShaun	WR	5-11	198	9-22-1980	1	California

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
93	Browning, John	DT	6-4	297	9-30-1973	7	West Virginia
95	Dalton, Lional	DT	6-1	315	2-21-1975	6	Eastern Michigan
92	Downing, Eric	DT	6-3	315	9-16-1978	3	Syracuse
71	Freeman, Eddie	DE	6-5	307	1-4-1978	2	UAB
98	Hicks, Eric	DE	6-6	280	6-17-1976	6	Maryland
99	Holliday, Vonnie	DE	6-5	290	12-11-1975	6	North Carolina
61	Sharpe, Montique	DT	6-2	296	3-10-1980	1	Wake Forest
90	Sims, Ryan	DT	6-4	315	5-4-1980	2	North Carolina
55	Stills, Gary	DE	6-2	244	7-11-1974	5	West Virginia
91	Truluck, R-Kal	DE	6-4	255	9-30-1974	2	Cortland State
66	Wilkerson, Jimmy	DE	6-2	271	1-04-1981	1	Oklahoma

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
24	Bartee, William	CB	6-1	200	6-25-1977	4	Oklahoma
26	Battle, Julian	CB	6-2	205	7-11-1981	1	Tennessee
38	Finley, Clint	S	6-1	210	3-27-1977	2	Nebraska
42	Harts, Shaunard	S	6-1	207	8-4-1978	3	Boise State
22	McCleon, Dexter	CB	5-10	195	10-9-1973	7	Clemson
35	Pile, Willie	S	6-2	206	5-25-1980	0	Virginia Tech
39	Shields, Scott	S	6-4	231	3-29-1976	2	Weber State
44	Warfield, Eric	CB	6-1	200	3-3-1976	6	Nebraska
25	Wesley, Greg	S	6-2	206	3-19-1978	4	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
30	West, Lyle	S	6-1	210	12-20-1976	4	San Jose State
21	Woods, Jerome	S	6-2	210	3-17-1973	7	Memphis

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
59	Barber, Shawn	LB	6-2	245	1-14-1975	6	Richmond
56	Beisel, Monty	LB	6-3	254	8-20-1978	3	Kansas State
52	Caver, Quinton	LB	6-4	241	8-22-1978	3	Arkansas
51	Fujita, Scott	LB	6-5	247	4-28-1979	2	California
53	Jones, Fred	LB	6-2	247	10-18-1977	3	Colorado
57	Maslowski, Mike	LB	6-1	243	7-11-1974	5	Wisconsin-La Crosse
50	Mitchell, Kawika	LB	6-1	253	10-10-1979	1	South Florida

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
8	Andersen, Morten	K	6-2	217	8-19-1960	22	Michigan State
9	Baker, Jason	P	6-1	201	5-17-1978	3	Iowa

ROBERT E. HUDSON, JR./ICON SMI

NEWMAN LOWRANCE

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE	
QB	Trent Green
FB	Tony Richardson
RB	Priest Holmes
LT	Willie Roaf
LG	Brian Waters
C	Casey Wiegmann
RG	Will Shields
RT	Chris Bober
TE	Tony Gonzalez
WR	Eddie Kennison
WR	Johnnie Morton
DEFENSE	
LE	Eric Hicks
LT	John Browning
NT	Ryan Sims
RE	Vonnie Holliday
LLB	Scott Fujita
MLB	Mike Maslowski
RLB	Shawn Barber
LCB	Eric Warfield
RCB	Dexter McCleon
SS	Greg Wesley
FS	Jerome Woods
SPECIAL TEAMS	
P	Jason Baker
K	Morten Andersen
PR	Dante Hall
KR	Dante Hall

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ Denver	
Sept. 12	8:30
W/L	Score:
WEEK 2 vs. Carolina	
Sept. 19	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 3 vs. Houston	
Sept. 26	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 4 @ Baltimore	
Oct. 4	9:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 5 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 6 @ Jacksonville	
Oct. 17	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 7 vs. Atlanta	
Oct. 24	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 8 @ Indianapolis	
Oct. 31	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 9 @ Tampa Bay	
Nov. 7	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 10 @ New Orleans	
Nov. 14	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 11 vs. New England	
Nov. 22	9:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 12 vs. San Diego	
Nov. 28	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 13 @ Oakland	
Dec. 5	4:05
W/L	Score:
WEEK 14 @ Tennessee	
Dec. 13	9:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 15 vs. Denver	
Dec. 19	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 16 vs. Oakland	
Dec. 25	5:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 17 @ San Diego	
Jan. 2	4:15
W/L	Score:

All times Eastern

AFC EAST AFC NORTH AFC SOUTH **AFC WEST** NFC EAST NFC NORTH NFC SOUTH NFC WEST

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
2	4	Siavii, Junior	DT	6-4	333	11-14-79	Oregon
2	29	Wilson, Kris	TE	6-1	246	8-22-81	Pittsburgh
3	30	Fox, Keyaron	LB	6-2	227	1-24-82	Georgia Tech
4	9	Parker, Samie	WR	5-10	178	3-25-81	Oregon
4	30	Allen, Jared	DE	6-6	265	4-3-82	Idaho State
6	30	McIntyre, Jeris	WR	5-11	203	7-4-81	Auburn
7	30	Sampson, Kevin	T	6-4	312	11-15-80	Syracuse

DENVER BRONCOS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 2 2003 RECORD: 10-6

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Marco Coleman, DE** (PHI)
- **Mike Quinn, QB** (HOU)
- **Willie Jackson, WR** (ATL)
- **Reggie Stephens, CB** (NYG)
- **Jed Weaver, TE** (SF)
- **Raylee Johnson, DE** (SD)
- **John Lynch, S** (TB)
- **Luther Elliss, DT** (DET)
- **Garrison Hearst, RB** (SF)
- **O.J. Santiago, TE** (OAK)
- **Cornell Green, OT** (TB)
- **Champ Bailey, CB** (trade, WAS)

STADIUM FACTS

INVESCO Field at Mile High

Capacity: **76,125** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **720-258-3333**
Web site: **www.denverbroncos.com**

Avg. Attendance **75,477**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **99.1**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$57.28**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$20.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$2.75**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$4.50 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.50 / 14oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: The Broncos were the first AFL team ever to beat an NFL squad, defeating the Detroit Lions, 13-7, in a preseason game Aug. 5, 1967.

STAT: For 59 consecutive regular-season weeks, the Broncos have had a record of .500 or better, tops in the NFL. Indianapolis is second with 32.

Broncos roll the dice with trade of Portis, but defense has the look of a real Champ

Look for Plummer to blossom in second season with Shanahan

Say this for the Broncos: They don't stand still. They know that teams in the NFL don't stay the same from year to year; they either get better or worse. The Broncos made bold moves to improve after a disappointing drubbing in the playoffs. Not many coaches would willingly part with a running back who gained 3,000 yards in his first two seasons, but Mike Shanahan did. The Broncos also paid to keep middle linebacker Al Wilson and made the defense better in that vaunted trade of Clinton Portis to Washington for four-time Pro Bowler Champ Bailey.

The Broncos have the parts, though some are distinctly available only for the short run. If they can keep Jake Plummer healthy, and if a coterie of backs measures up as Portis' replacement, the Broncos could dominate offensively.

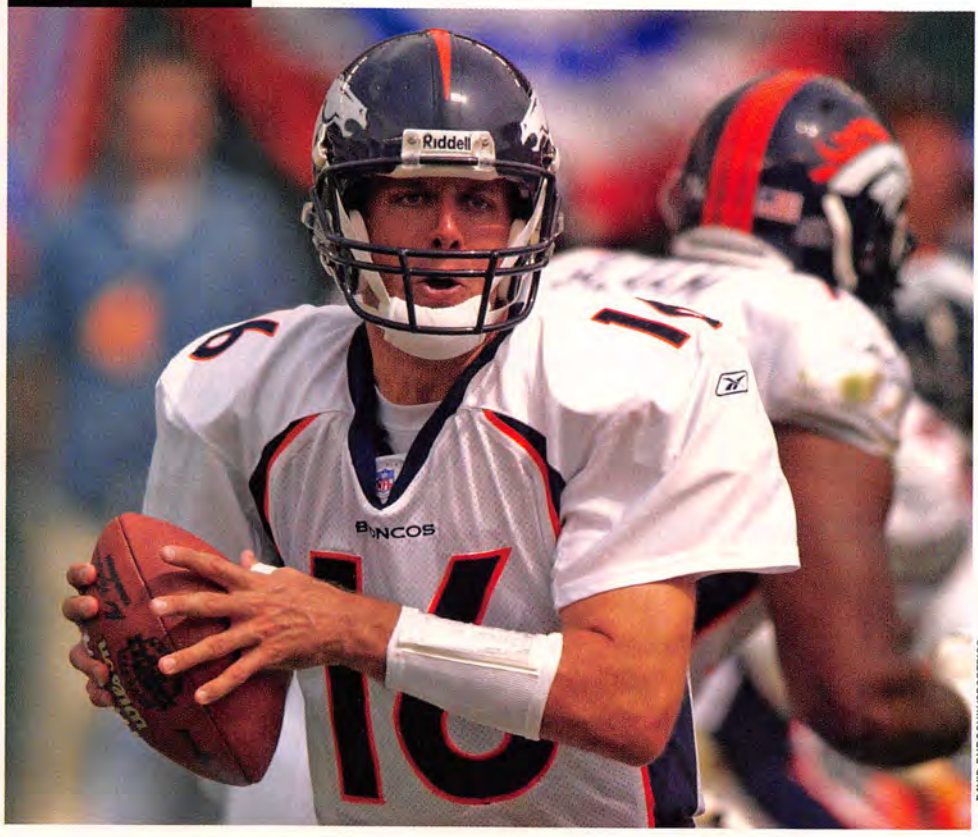
Offensive line Grade: A-

This strong group used addition by subtraction to get better, dumping left tackle Ephraim Salaam. Matt Lepsis moves from right tackle to Salaam's spot, which he had long wanted to do. George Foster, a No. 1 pick last year, takes over at right tackle. Denver's line lacks bulk but stresses quickness, aggressiveness and unity in the cut-blocking schemes that lead to such great cutback running. The coaching wizard behind this unit's success, Alex Gibbs, moves on after commuting in and out as a quasi-consultant.

Quarterbacks Grade: B

Plummer gave his fans and critics plenty to debate in his first season with the Broncos. After a poor opener, he settled in and started to find his stride, only to lose time to an injury. With a second year in the Shanahan system, Plummer should really shine. His mobility behind an excellent line and a complementary running game give him the tools to work with. How he plays this season will answer the lingering

Jake Plummer, QB



DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

questions about his head. Danny Kanell should be OK as a backup.

Running backs

Grade: B+

Welcome to the computer age, where Denver uses a plug-and-play system. The Broncos don't waste time with high draft picks here, nor do they see much difference between one and the other. So it's goodbye to Portis and hello to Garrison Hearst, Quentin Griffin and Ahmaad Galloway, with maybe a few odd carries for fullback Mike Anderson. Griffin showed some shake-and-bake while subbing for Portis last year, but he's not big enough to take the pounding that comes with 20-plus carries a game. Hearst is the established pro but might be more of a role player than an every-down back. Then there's rookie Tatum Bell. This ought to be an interesting balancing act.

Receivers

Grade: B-

Rod Smith remains an underrated, big-play threat but he's starting to age just a tad. Ashley Lelie really has to show better concentration and eliminate drops. He has the speed to be a terrific deep threat but lacks overall consistency. Ed McCaffrey retired. Shannon Sharpe's decision to play another season adds veteran savvy but Jed Weaver, coming off a career year with San Francisco, ought to play a key role here.

Defensive line

Grade: B-

A marquee pass rusher is hard to find. The Broncos lost Bert Berry as a free agent just as he began to emerge. They might be back to quick fixes until some long-term answers come along. For now, they're looking at Marco Coleman, well past his prime in chasing quarterbacks, and Raylee Johnson, a journeyman who was last with San Diego. They may need more snaps than aging Luther Elliss can give them after the failed experiment with Daryl Gardener. Elliss hasn't been healthy in a couple of years, and Johnson has also battled injuries.

Linebackers

Grade: B

Wilson's re-signing keeps the Broncos strong in the middle. This is an active player who can cover a lot of ground. Questions abound about his running mates, though. John Mobley (spinal cord) is coming off a season-ending injury, while Ian Gold left for Tampa Bay. Mobley also has some legal issues to deal with. Hence, the selection of University of Miami linebacker D.J. Williams with their first-round pick at No. 17. He would be a great fit on the weakside.

Secondary

Grade: B+

Bailey gives the Broncos the shutdown cornerback they've desperately sought through many a failed romance (Dale Carter, Willie Middlebrooks, Deltha O'Neal). Bailey's arrival puts more pressure on Kelly Herndon, who will now be the target of most passing attacks. Opponents will stay away from Bailey. John Lynch did not play like his old Pro Bowl self last season with Tampa Bay and had spurs removed from his neck. He'll lend some pop at strong safety but has trouble getting in position to make plays. If healthy, Nick Ferguson returns at free safety. Kenoy Kennedy could be the odd man out. This is a deep group.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	349.9	7
Rushing	164.3	2
Passing	185.6	22
Scoring	381	10
Punt Returns	11.3	9
Kick Returns	22.1	11
Red Zone TD %	55.4	9
Total Defense	277.1	4
Against Rush	100.3	7
Against Pass	176.8	6
Points Allowed	301	9
Interceptions	9	32
Sacks	36	10
Turnover Diff.	-4	22T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
334	133	162	39

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
56	272	31	18

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
20	19	3	1

BRONCOS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **JOHN ELWAY**
   Career Passing Yards: **51,475**
   Career TD Passes: **300**
2. **CRAIG MORTON**
   Career Passing Yards: **27,908**
   Career TD Passes: **183**
3. **CHARLEY JOHNSON**
   Career Passing Yards: **24,410**
   Career TD Passes: **170**

SPORTING NEWS/ICON SMI

History indicates Broncos won't regret trading offense for defense, Portis for Bailey

Even if Clinton Portis had not threatened a holdout, all but forcing a trade to Washington, the Broncos likely would have felt comfortable dealing him for cornerback Champ Bailey and a second-round pick.

After all, the Broncos have found it's much easier to develop a star running back than a dominating cornerback, though coaches insist it's not possible to for just any rusher to parachute in and thrive in their system.

Terrell Davis, perhaps the best back the team has ever had, was hardly missed once Olandis Gary rushed for 1,159 yards in only 12 games in 1999. The following year, Mike Anderson (a sixth-round pick) racked up 1,487 yards. Portis, a second-round pick out of Miami, beat them both out of a job and emerged as a star rookie in 2002.

Second-year player Quentin Griffin figures to get the next shot in the backfield after displaying some Barry Sanders-like moves during the last two games of last season with Portis injured. Griffin rushed 28 times for 136 yards against Indianapolis, but some wonder if he can be a workhorse-type back at just 5-foot-7, 195 pounds.

Still, that uncertainty was worth the risk to land a proven cornerback like Bailey, a four-time Pro Bowler who should end the Broncos' streak of disappointing corners (Dale Carter, Ray Crockett, Willie Middlebrooks, etc.).

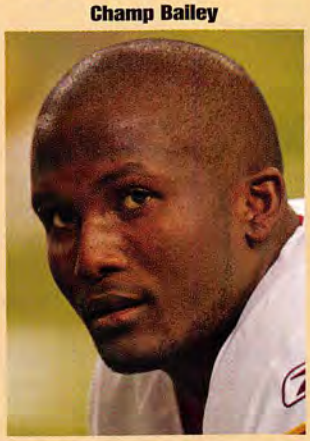
Not only that, but Bailey hopes to emulate Deion Sanders, another dazzling cornerback, and moonlight at wide receiver. During his junior year at Georgia, Bailey caught 47 passes for 744 yards and five touchdowns. In 1998, Sanders started 16 games at cornerback and eight at wide receiver for Dallas.

Denver fans have every right to be wary of the trade. After all, the team generally has not tangled well with Joe Gibbs, the returning Redskins coach who defeated the Broncos 34-3 in his final season, four years after routing Denver in the Super Bowl.

Portis will be the key to Gibbs' rebuilding process. Bailey, however, could be a cornerstone for Denver, with Portis proving to be just another interchangeable part.

—Pete Williams

Champ Bailey



JAMIE SQUIRE/GETTY IMAGES

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 10, Lost 6

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	30-10	at Cincinnati
09/14	W	37-13	at San Diego
09/22	W	31-10	Oakland
09/28	W	20-16	Detroit
10/05	L	24-23	at Kansas City
10/12	W	17-14	Pittsburgh
10/19	L	28-20	at Minnesota
10/26	L	26-6	at Baltimore
11/03	L	30-26	New England
11/16	W	37-8	San Diego
11/23	L	19-10	Chicago
11/30	W	22-8	at Oakland
12/07	W	45-27	Kansas City
12/14	W	23-20 (OT)	Cleveland
12/21	W	31-17	at Indianapolis
12/28	L	31-3	at Green Bay

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Portis	290	1591	5.5	65t	14
Griffin	94	345	3.7	23	0
Anderson	70	257	3.7	44	3
Plummer	37	205	5.5	40	3
Smith	10	98	9.8	26	0
Lelie	8	43	5.4	13	0
Sapp	12	31	2.6	5	0
Droughns	6	14	2.3	12	0
Beuerlein	5	13	2.6	7	0
Madise	1	10	10.0	10	0
J. Jackson	1	9	9.0	9	0
Cole	2	8	4.0	8	0
Kanell	6	5	0.8	9	0
Broncos	**543**	**2629**	**4.8**	**65t**	**20**
Opponents	**379**	**1605**	**4.2**	**98t**	**11**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Smith	74	845	11.4	38	3
Sharpe	62	770	12.4	28	8
Portis	38	314	8.3	72	0
Lelie	37	628	17.0	60	2
McCaffrey	19	195	10.3	23	0
Anderson	12	53	4.4	18	2
Droughns	9	87	9.7	15	2
Griffin	8	61	7.6	24	0
D. Carswell	6	53	8.8	19	1
Putzier	4	34	8.5	13	0
Broncos	**280**	**3126**	**11.2**	**72**	**19**
Opponents	**265**	**3049**	**11.5**	**66t**	**17**

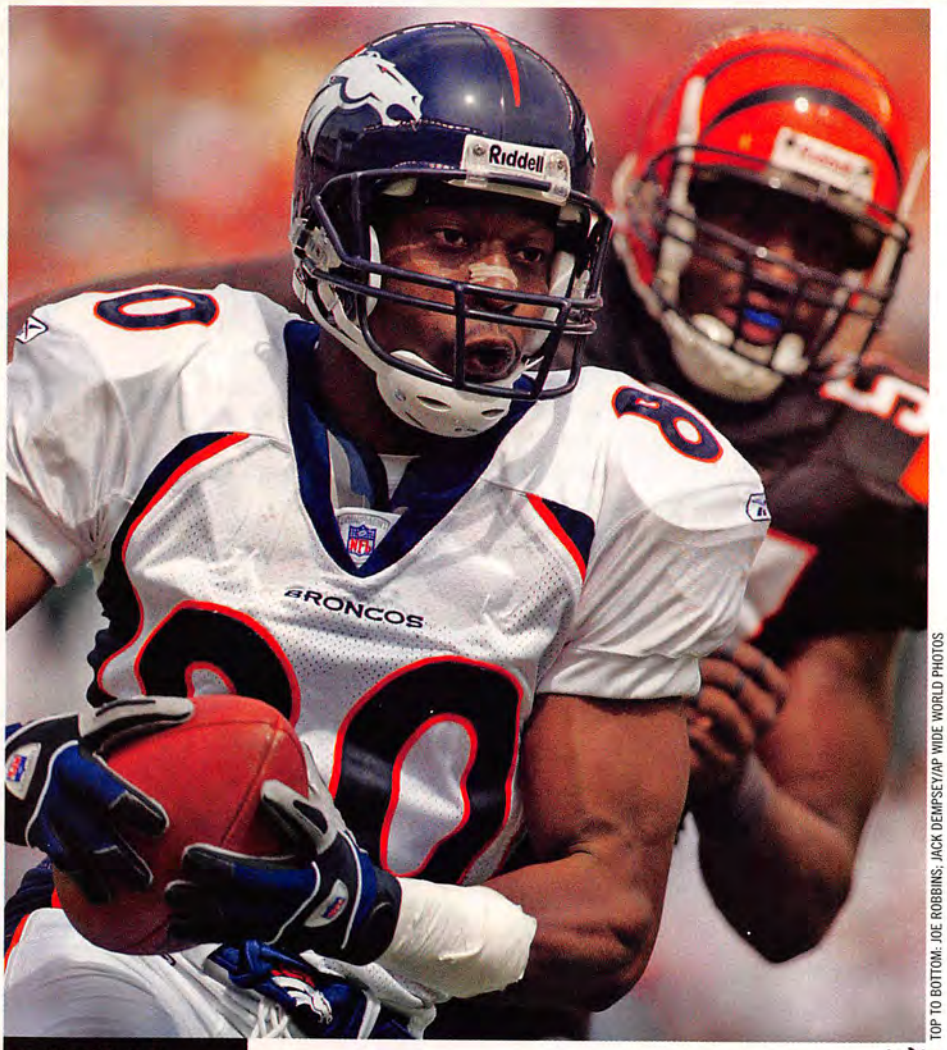
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Plummer	302	189	2182	15	7
Kanell	103	53	442	2	5
Beuerlein	63	33	389	2	5
J. Jackson	9	4	41	0	1
Smith	1	1	72	0	0
Broncos	**479**	**280**	**3126**	**19**	**18**
Opponents	**495**	**265**	**3049**	**17**	**9**

SACKS

Berry 11.5, Hayward 8.5, Pryce 8.5, Fatafehi 2.5, Ferguson 1.0, Kennedy 1.0, Pope 1.0, Wilson 1.0

Broncos 36.0, Opponents 25.0

t=touchdown



TOP TO BOTTOM: JOE ROBBINS; JACK DEMPSEY/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Rod Smith, WR

Special teams

Grade: B

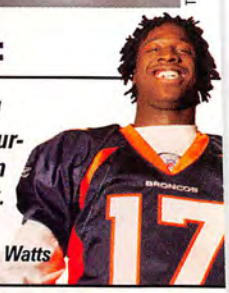
Losing Keith Burns, a spirited and willing veteran, has to hurt. He was a welcome presence on a unit usually populated by kids and spare parts. Kicker Jason Elam is as good as anyone and has great range. He can kick a game-winner without so much as a hiccup. Punter Micah Knorr is competent but nothing special. With Chris Cole and O'Neal gone, the Broncos need new return artists.

Management

Grade: B+

Few teams are dominated from the management level through the coaching ranks as Denver is by Shanahan. This is his operation. The Broncos haven't done well in the draft (see those failed cornerbacks) in recent years and also spent a lot of money that yielded little (Carter, DT Daryl Gardener, QB Brian Griese) in return. At least the Broncos made it back to the playoffs last year, though Indianapolis tore them apart. Shanahan's teams will always be among the NFL's top 10. If the Bailey gambit pays off and they pull together defensively, they might reach the conference championship game.

He said it:



"I think I'm a pretty good blocker. I'm not a take-your-head-off guy, but I'll get in your way like a little gnat. I'll get in your way."

—Broncos WR draftee Darius Watts

Bottom line

With Oakland rebuilding and San Diego a mess, the Broncos know the division title comes down to them and Kansas City. The Broncos can match the Chiefs in point output, so improving defensively might be the real difference. Having the linebacker corps intact and healthy for a whole season would be a plus behind a somewhat suspect defensive line. Expect Plummer to play like a Pro Bowl quarterback. Look for a better defensive effort. It says here the AFC West won't be decided until the final weekend.

FINAL GRADE **89**

BRONCOS ROSTER

Mike Shanahan, head coach

Ronnie Bradford, special teams; **Jacob Burney**, def. line; **Troy Calhoun**, off. asst./special teams; **Larry Coyer**, def. coord.; **Rick Dennison**, off. line; **David Gibbs**, def. backs; **Gary Kubiak**, off. coord.; **Pat McPherson**, QBs; **Brian Pariani**, TEs; **Jimmy Spencer**, asst. def. backs; **Bobby Turner**, RBs; **Steve Watson**, WRs; **Kirk Doll**, def. asst./special teams; **Keith Millard**, asst. def. line/pass rush specialist

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
11	Beuerlein, Steve	QB	6-3	220	3-7-1965	14	Notre Dame
17	Jackson, Jarious	QB	6-1	228	5-3-1977	4	Notre Dame
13	Kanell, Danny	QB	6-3	218	11-21-1973	6	Florida State
16	Plummer, Jake	QB	6-2	212	12-19-1974	7	Arizona State
	Quinn, Mike	QB	6-4	216	4-15-1974	2	Stephen F. Austin
2	Woodbury, Tory	QB	6-2	208	7-12-1978	2	Winston-Salem

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
69	Alexander, P.J.	T	6-4	297	12-23-1978	0	Syracuse
65	Carlisle, Cooper	G	6-5	295	8-11-1977	4	Florida
65	Collins, Calvin	G	6-2	310	1-5-1974	5	Texas A&M
72	Foster, George	T	6-5	338	6-9-1980	1	Georgia
74	Green, Cornell	G	6-6	315	8-25-1976	2	Central Florida
50	Hamilton, Ben	C	6-4	283	8-18-1977	2	Minnesota
78	Lepsis, Matt	T	6-4	290	1-13-1974	6	Colorado
66	Nalen, Tom	C	6-3	286	5-13-1971	10	Boston College
62	Neil, Dan	G	6-2	285	10-21-1973	7	Texas
75	Stephens, Jamain	T	6-6	340	1-9-1974	6	North Carolina A&T
67	Watton, Chris	G	6-3	305	10-6-1977	0	Baylor

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
38	Anderson, Mike	RB	6-1	230	9-21-1973	4	Utah
34	Droughns, Reuben	RB	5-11	207	8-21-1978	3	Oregon
27	Galloway, Ahmaad	RB	6-1	223	3-10-1980	0	Alabama
22	Griffin, Quentin	RB	5-7	195	1-12-1981	1	Oklahoma
20	Hearst, Garrison	RB	5-11	215	1-4-1971	9	Georgia
39	Johnson, Kyle	RB	6-1	242	12-15-1978	0	Syracuse
37	Sapp, Cecil	RB	5-11	229	12-12-1978	1	Colorado State

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Adams, Charlie	WR	6-2	190	10-23-1979	1	Hofstra
89	Carswell, Dwayne	TE	6-3	260	1-18-1972	10	Liberty
86	Hape, Patrick	TE	6-4	262	6-6-1974	7	Alabama
81	Harris, Atnaf	WR	6-1	182	2-27-1979	1	Cal State Northridge
	Jackson, Willie	WR	6-1	212	8-16-1971	8	Florida
83	Leach, Mike	TE	6-2	245	10-18-1976	4	William & Mary
85	Lelie, Ashley	WR	6-3	200	2-16-1980	2	Hawaii
82	Madise, Adrian	WR	5-11	215	3-23-1980	1	TCU
88	Putzier, Jeb	TE	6-4	256	1-20-1979	2	Boise State
	Santiago, O.J.	TE	6-7	265	4-4-1974	6	Kent State
84	Sharpe, Shannon	TE	6-2	228	6-26-1968	14	Savannah State
80	Smith, Rod	WR	6-1	200	5-15-1970	9	Missouri Southern State
	Weaver, Jed	TE	6-4	258	8-11-1976	5	Oregon

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Almanzar, Luis	DT	6-3	295	12-15-1976	0	SMS
	Coleman, Marco	DE	6-3	286	12-18-1969	12	Georgia Tech
96	Davis, Dorsett	DE	6-5	305	1-24-1979	1	Mississippi State
97	Eason, Nicholas	DT	6-3	301	5-29-1980	0	Clemson
94	Elliss, Luther	DT	6-5	318	3-22-1973	9	Utah
68	Fatafehi, Mario	DT	6-2	300	1-27-1979	3	Kansas State
98	Hayward, Reggie	DE	6-5	270	3-14-1979	3	Iowa State
90	Holland, Darius	DT	6-5	330	11-10-1973	8	Colorado
99	Johnson, Raylee	DE	6-3	272	6-1-1970	10	Arkansas
91	McNeal, Bryant	DE	6-4	248	7-13-1979	0	Clemson
95	Mitchell, Clint	DE	6-6	257	9-21-1980	0	Florida
75	Pope, Monsanto	DT	6-3	300	1-27-1978	2	Virginia
93	Pryce, Trevor	DE	6-5	295	8-3-1975	7	Clemson

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
24	Bailey, Champ	CB	6-1	192	6-22-1978	5	Georgia
42	Brandon, Sam	S	6-2	200	7-5-1979	2	UNLV
31	Herndon, Kelly	CB	5-10	180	11-3-1976	2	Toledo
23	Israel, Ron	CB	6-1	212	1-5-1978	1	Notre Dame
28	Kennedy, Kenoy	S	6-1	215	11-15-1977	4	Arkansas
47	Lynch, John	S	6-2	220	9-25-1971	11	Stanford
23	Middlebrooks, Willie	CB	6-1	200	2-12-1979	3	Minnesota
33	Spencer, Jimmy	CB	5-9	188	3-29-1969	12	Florida
34	Stephens, Reggie	CB	5-9	200	2-21-1975	3	Rutgers
21	Turner, Scott	CB	5-10	190	2-26-1972	8	Illinois
35	Walls, Lenny	CB	6-4	192	9-26-1979	2	Boston College
32	Young, Chris	S	6-1	210	1-23-1980	1	Georgia Tech

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
93	Chukwurah, Patrick	LB	6-1	250	3-1-1979	2	Wyoming
51	Mobley, John	LB	6-1	236	10-10-1973	8	Kutztown
58	Pierce, Terry	LB	6-1	251	6-21-1981	1	Kansas State
59	Spragan, Donnie	LB	6-3	239	7-12-1976	2	Stanford
57	Sykes, Jashon	LB	6-2	236	9-25-1979	1	Colorado
56	Wilson, Al	LB	6-1	240	6-21-1977	5	Tennessee

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
1	Elam, Jason	K	5-11	200	3-08-1970	11	Hawaii
6	Epstein, Hayden	K	6-2	214	11-16-1980	1	Michigan
4	Knorr, Micah	P	6-2	199	1-9-1975	4	Utah State

JACK DEMPSEY/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

PAUL JASIENSKI

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Jake Plummer
FB	Mike Anderson
RB	Quentin Griffin
LT	Matt Lepsis
LG	Ben Hamilton
C	Tom Nalen
RG	Dan Neil
RT	George Foster
TE	Shannon Sharpe
WR	Rod Smith
WR	Ashley Lelie

DEFENSE

LE	Marco Coleman
RT	Monsanto Pope
LT	Darius Holland
RE	Raylee Johnson
SLB	John Mobley
MLB	Al Wilson
WLB	D.J. Williams
LCB	Champ Bailey
RCB	Kelly Herndon
SS	John Lynch
FS	Nick Ferguson

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Micah Knorr
K	Jason Elam
PR	Kelly Herndon
KR	Reuben Droughns

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Kansas City	
Sept. 12	8:30
W/L	Score:
WEEK 2 @ Jacksonville	
Sept. 19	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 3 vs. San Diego	
Sept. 26	4:05
W/L	Score:
WEEK 4 @ Tampa Bay	
Oct. 3	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 5 vs. Carolina	
Oct. 10	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 6 @ Oakland	
Oct. 17	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 7 @ Cincinnati	
Oct. 25	9:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 8 vs. Atlanta	
Oct. 31	4:05
W/L	Score:
WEEK 9 vs. Houston	
Nov. 7	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 10 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 11 @ New Orleans	
Nov. 21	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 12 vs. Oakland	
Nov. 28	8:30
W/L	Score:
WEEK 13 @ San Diego	
Dec. 5	4:05
W/L	Score:
WEEK 14 vs. Miami	
Dec. 12	4:05
W/L	Score:
WEEK 15 @ Kansas City	
Dec. 19	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 16 @ Tennessee	
Dec. 25	8:30
W/L	Score:
WEEK 17 vs. Indianapolis	
Jan. 2	4:15
W/L	Score:

All times Eastern

AFC EAST AFC NORTH AFC SOUTH **AFC WEST** NFC EAST NFC NORTH NFC SOUTH NFC WEST

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	17	Williams, D.J.	LB	6-1	247	7-20-82	Miami (FL)
2	9	Bell, Tatum	RB	5-11	212	3-2-81	Oklahoma State
2	22	Watts, Darius	WR	6-1	188	12-19-81	Marshall
3	22	LeSueur, Jeremy	CB	6-1	197	10-5-80	Michigan
5	20	Shoate, Jeff	CB	5-10	189	3-23-81	San Diego State
6	6	Luke, Triandos	WR	5-10	189	12-24-81	Alabama
6	25	Sewell, Josh	C	6-2	300	7-26-81	Nebraska
7	24	Mauck, Matt	QB	6-1	213	12-12-79	LSU
7	46	Miree, Brandon	RB	5-11	237	4-14-81	Pittsburgh
7	49	Van Pelt, Bradlee	QB	6-2	223	7-3-80	Colorado State

OAKLAND RAIDERS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 3 2003 RECORD: 4-12

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Ike Charlton, CB** (NYG)
- **Danny Clark, LB** (JAX)
- **Warren Sapp, DT** (TB)
- **Ted Washington, DT** (NE)
- **Ron Stone, OG** (NYG)
- **Dwayne Rudd, LB** (TB)
- **Ray Buchanan, CB** (ATL)
- **Roland Williams, TE** (TB)
- **Denard Walker, CB** (MIN)

STADIUM FACTS

Network Associates Coliseum

Capacity: **63,147** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **510-762-2277**
Web site: **www.raiders.com**

Avg. Attendance **55,008**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **87.1**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$58.89**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$15.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$4.50 / 14oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.50 / 14oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Raiders owner Al Davis has been selected by a record eight Pro Football Hall-of-Fame inductees to present them at the Canton, Ohio, ceremony.

STAT: Over its first 21 seasons, Oakland posted an NFL-best 29-5-1 record on Monday night, but since 1991, the Raiders are just 7-16.

LOOK IT UP: The Raiders have a .500 or better regular-season record against 28 of the other 31 NFL teams, with the three exceptions being the Ravens (1-2), Chiefs (42-43-2) and Texans (first meeting this season).

MICKEY ELLIOT

Warren Sapp, DT

Turner will find out in a hurry that Raiders are getting older, slower—especially on offense

Rod Woodson, Rice, Brown are on their last legs

One year they're in the Super Bowl under a first-year coach. The next? They're old, slow, riddled with dissension and injury and that coach, Bill Callahan, is gone. So is the de facto general manager, Bruce Allen.

If Norv Turner wanted to be a head coach again in the worst way, he got his wish.

The philosophy will change, and so must the roster. Hard decisions await on future Hall-of-Famers Jerry Rice, who wants to play another season, and Rod Woodson, as well as with youngsters like Charles Woodson.

Turner isn't seen as a fiery leader or a disciplinarian, which the Raiders surely need, but he brings an offensive style that Al Davis always longed for even while Jon Gruden and Callahan enjoyed success. Turner likes the power running game and the deep pass, as does Davis. Rich Gannon comes off a season-ending shoulder injury but may still be the club's best bet at quarterback in the short term.

Offensive line — Grade: B

A lot of shuffling of bodies went on here, and there could be more. Langston Walker ought to step in for Lincoln Kennedy at right tackle and top draft pick Robert Gallery, a prototypical blind-side protector, mans the left side. Ron Stone should supplant Mo Collins as the right guard, with Collins, Frank Middleton and Brad Badger likely to duke it out on the other side. Barrett Robbins returns at center but rookie Jake Grove could beat him out. It's an interesting blend of old and new, youth and experience, but how fast will it come together?

Quarterbacks — Grade: B

Gannon was the NFL's MVP in 2002 and a hotheaded flop in his injury-interrupted '03 season. It seemed as if he never got over that Super Bowl loss in which he threw five interceptions. Now the club will move away from the West Coast system in which he fit so beautifully. How well is he suited to throwing deep? His obvious plusses are experience and

knowledge, which Turner values highly. But Gannon also has contract issues that the club will want to address before it goes ahead with him. In Marques Tuiasosopo, the club may have a young player worth grooming.

Running backs

Grade: C

Mighty thin and elderly back here after Charlie Garner voided his contract and departed as a free agent. Tyrone Wheatley can't possibly be an every-down back with his history of injuries. Justin Fargas also finished his rookie season on injured reserve. Fargas had some explosion before the knee injury. J.R. Redmond simply occupies a roster space. Zach Crockett is a serviceable fullback and a good guy in short-yardage situations. This group needs lots of help, and soon.

Receivers

Grade: C

We should respect our elders, but that's getting hard to do. Rice wants to squeeze out one more season, and who should tell him no? Tim Brown looks done. Jerry Porter must remain injury-free for the veteran contingent to have any hope of contributing. He'll have to be the deep threat in the Turner scheme. In Turner's offense, tight end Doug Jolley could also emerge as a middle-distance threat if he can beat out Teyo Johnson.

Defensive line

Grade: B

The Raiders wasted no time in landing 365-pound nose tackle Ted Washington in free agency to be their bulwark against the run. That was the good news. The bad news is that he has broken his leg in each of the last two seasons and played only about 30 percent of New England's snaps last year. Don't ask him to do much more. Maybe he won't have to, with Warren Sapp also coming aboard. That duo of elder statesmen, combined with John Parrella, should create a solid core for a defense that was last in the NFL against the run. Maybe DeLawrence Grant will add something as a pass-rushing end. Maybe not.

Linebackers

Grade: C+

Dwayne Rudd could make an impact on the inside of a new 3-4 alignment after years of having no impact. He's undisciplined at times but was a big-play performer when he came into the league in 1998 with Minnesota. Napoleon Harris is an active, decent tackler who should be better with big bodies up front in the defensive line sucking up blockers. He's not ideally suited for the inside, though. Tyler Brayton, Tim Johnson and Shurron Pierson will compete for the outside spots.

Secondary

Grade: B

The Raiders have to harness all the talent they've assembled back here. Cornerbacks Phillip Buchanon and Charles Woodson should be special players and, at times, they are. But they've not been consistent or, in Woodson's case, pleased with the coaching. Rod Woodson may be on Medicare before he calls it quits. He's going into his 18th season and still has enough physical skill to go with a lifetime of savvy. He could bump strong safety Derrick Gibson if the club sticks with Anthony Dorsett at free. Last year's second No. 1 pick, Nnamdi Asomugha, has to get on the field at cornerback or safety.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	285.8	25
Rushing	113.9	16
Passing	171.9	27
Scoring	270	26T
Punt Returns	12.9	3
Kick Returns	20.7	24
Red Zone TD %	44.1	26
Total Defense	369.0	30
Against Rush	156.9	32
Against Pass	212.1	22
Points Allowed	379	25T
Interceptions	14	20T
Sacks	25	28
Turnover Diff.	-1	18T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
258	98	140	20

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
34	137	15	11

TOUCHDOWNS

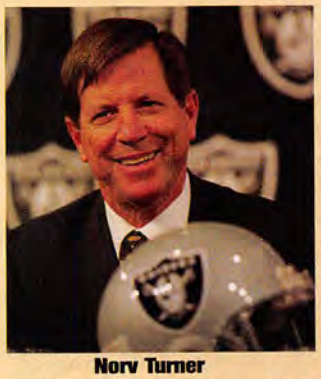
Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
15	9	5	2

RAIDERS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **KEN STABLER**
   Career Passing Yards: **27,938**
   Career TD Passes: **194**
2. **JIM PLUNKETT**
   Career Passing Yards: **25,882**
   Career TD Passes: **164**
3. **DARYLE LAMONICA**
   Career Passing Yards: **19,154**
   Career TD Passes: **164**

FINALSHOT/RP

Turner's philosophy good fit for demanding owner Davis



Norv Turner

JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

When Al Davis hired Norv Turner to succeed Bill Callahan, many wondered why the Oakland Raiders' owner didn't go with a higher-profile, successful coach. After all, Turner struggled in his only other head-coaching gig, with the Washington Redskins from 1994 to 2000.

It's tough to say anyone is a perfect fit for Davis. But Turner might come as close as anyone. After dealing with owner Dan Snyder's temper and crazy personnel whims in Washington, Turner should find Davis downright low-key.

Davis never embraced the West Coast offense implemented by Callahan's predecessor as Raider coach, Jon Gruden, the same offense that was used to produce a Super Bowl appearance by Callahan. The owner prefers a power running game combined with play-action and downfield passes to take advantage of defenses stacked up front.

It's the exact style Turner learned from mentor John Robinson, the longtime Rams coach who's now the head coach at UNLV, and has used with great success throughout his career as an offensive coordinator working with the likes of Emmitt Smith, Stephen Davis and Ricky Williams.

With the West Coast style spreading throughout the league in the 1990s, Turner's philosophies seemed old-school. But they're back in vogue these days, which pleases Davis.

If Turner is looking to overhaul his offensive personnel, he's coming along at a good time. The Raiders averaged 28.2 points per game in 2002, second best in the NFL, but fell to 16.9 last season, 26th in the league. He inherits an accomplished, if aging, unit in dire need of an injection of youth.

As he did in Washington, Turner will serve as both head coach and offensive coordinator. He insists the team is not rebuilding, even coming off a 4-12 season with the oldest roster in the game, and believes it can return quickly to its 2002 form.

"I don't think I ever heard the world 'rebuild' used with the Raiders," Turner says. "Every team starts over next Monday, and there's been great turnaround by teams. Every team has a chance to get better and there are lots of ways of doing it."

—Pete Williams

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 4, Lost 12

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	25-20	at Tennessee
09/14	W	23-20	Cincinnati
09/22	L	31-10	at Denver
09/28	W	34-31 (OT)	San Diego
10/05	L	24-21	at Chicago
10/12	L	13-7	at Cleveland
10/20	L	17-10	Kansas City
11/02	L	23-13	at Detroit
11/09	L	27-24 (OT)	New York Jets
11/16	W	28-18	Minnesota
11/23	L	27-24	at Kansas City
11/30	L	22-8	Denver
12/07	L	27-7	at Pittsburgh
12/14	W	20-12	Baltimore
12/22	L	41-7	Green Bay
12/28	L	21-14	at San Diego

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Wheatley	159	678	4.3	41	4
Garner	120	553	4.6	33	3
Fargas	40	203	5.1	53	0
Crockett	48	145	3.0	44	7
Mirer	20	83	4.2	20	1
Whitted	6	37	6.2	16	0
Redmond	9	30	3.3	9	0
Martin	5	28	5.6	8	0
Tuiasosopo	6	22	3.7	8	0
R. Johnson	2	15	7.5	14	0
Gannon	6	18	3.0	6	0
Porter	1	10	10.0	10	0
Raiders	**423**	**1822**	**4.3**	**53**	**15**
Opponents	**544**	**2510**	**4.6**	**55t**	**21**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Rice	63	869	13.8	47t	2
Brown	52	567	10.9	36t	2
Garner	48	386	8.0	46t	1
Jolley	31	250	8.1	26	1
Porter	28	361	12.9	35	1
Te. Johnson	14	128	9.1	21	1
Wheatley	12	120	10.0	25	0
Whitted	7	106	15.1	36t	1
Crockett	7	53	7.6	16	0
Santiago	5	69	13.8	36	0
Curry	5	31	6.2	16	0
Hetherington	2	23	11.5	17	0
Fargas	2	2	1.0	6	0
Gabriel	1	17	17.0	17	0
Redmond	1	6	6.0	6	0
Raiders	**278**	**2988**	**10.7**	**47t**	**9**
Opponents	**286**	**3556**	**12.4**	**65t**	**21**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Gannon	225	125	1274	6	4
Mirer	221	116	1267	3	5
Tuiasosopo	45	25	324	0	3
R. Johnson	13	6	54	0	1
Martin	16	6	69	0	1
Raiders	**521**	**278**	**2988**	**9**	**14**
Opponents	**467**	**286**	**3556**	**21**	**14**

SACKS

Coleman 5.5, Armstrong 3.0, Brayton 2.5, Cooper 2.5, Bromell 2.0, Harris 2.0, Romanowski 2.0, Gbaja-Biamila 1.0, Gibson 1.0, Grant 1.0, Smith 1.0, C. Woodson 1.0, Barton 0.5

Raiders 25.0, Opponents 43.0

t=touchdown

DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS (2)

Charles Woodson, CB

Special teams

Grade: B

Excellent punter, good kicker, some decent players who can run and cover. The added edge will come from new special-teams coach Joe Avezzano, who did wonderful things in Dallas under Jimmy Johnson (and alongside Turner). Johnson believed strongly in special teams and kept players around who specialized in specials. That's part of the reason the Raiders signed Danny Clark away from Jacksonville. Punter Shane Lechler is as good as anyone and kicker Sebastian Janikowski should be, too, if he can maintain the sort of consistency he showed last year. He missed only three field-goal tries and two of them were from the 50 or beyond. Buchanon is a gem on punt returns.

Management

Grade: C+

The Raiders never followed a traditional organizational hierarchy and still don't. With Bruce Allen gone, longtime personnel executive Mike Lombardi moves higher on the ladder. Make no mistake, though, about Davis being involved. Turner will call the plays, which should be welcome after last year's alternating mess between Callahan and offensive coordinator Marc Trestman. Defensively, Turner will want more pressure and more blitzing. Turner is Davis' guy, but no one can be sure how long any of Davis' relationships will last.

He said it:

"I'm very confident that I've come back stronger and with a livelier arm. I've put a lot of extra energy and effort into it and I feel like I am going to be a lot better player than I was last year."

—Rich Gannon on returning from injury

Bottom line

The poet Robert Burns wrote, "Let us grow old together, you and I," and the Raiders took his advice. They all lost a step at the same time, creaked a bit more, seemed a little less durable. Throw in the unstable locker-room dynamics fostered by Callahan, and all the elements of a collapse came together in the imperfect storm that was the Raiders last season.

Turner isn't exactly the type to put a personal stamp on a team, and that might be just what the Raiders need now. They're still old in too many places, especially receiver, and generally lacking in speed on the offensive side of the ball. They don't think they're rebuilding, so let's not wake them from their dreams of greatness with the bad news.

FINAL GRADE **84**

RAIDERS ROSTER

Norv Turner, head coach

Fred Biletnikoff, wide receivers; **Jimmy Raye,** asst. head coach/off. coord.; **Rob Ryan,** def. coord.; **Joe Avezzano,** special teams; **Martin Bayless,** special teams asst.; **Willie Brown,** squad development; **Sam Clancy,** def. line; **Chris Griswold,** def. asst.; **Pat Jones,** outside linebackers; **Aaron Kromer,** off. line; **Clayton Lopez,** def. backs; **Don Martindale,** inside linebackers; **John Morton,** tight ends, **Skip Peete,** running backs; **Steve Sarkisian,** quarterbacks; **Chris Turner,** off. asst.

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
12	Gannon, Rich	QB	6-3	210	12-20-1965	15	Delaware
17	Martin, Tee	QB	6-2	225	7-25-1978	2	Tennessee
8	Tuiasosopo, Marques	QB	6-1	220	3-22-1979	3	Washington

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
70	Badger, Brad	T	6-4	320	1-11-1975	7	Stanford
73	Campion, Pete	T	6-4	307	12-3-1979	0	North Dakota State
79	Collins, Mo	G	6-4	325	9-22-1976	6	Florida
71	Hulsey, Corey	G	6-4	325	7-26-1977	2	Clemson
72	Kennedy, Lincoln	T	6-6	335	2-12-1971	11	Washington
73	Middleton, Frank	G	6-4	330	10-25-1974	7	Arizona
63	Robbins, Barret	C	6-3	320	8-26-1973	9	Texas Christian
67	Saipaia, Blaine	C	6-3	310	8-25-1978	0	Colorado State
65	Sims, Barry	T	6-5	300	12-1-1974	5	Utah
78	Slaughter, Chad	T	6-8	340	6-4-1978	1	Alcorn State
65	Stone, Ron	G	6-5	325	7-20-1971	10	Boston College
62	Treu, Adam	C	6-5	300	6-24-1974	7	Nebraska
66	Walker, Langston	T	6-8	345	9-3-1979	2	California
77	Wong, Joe	G	6-6	315	2-24-1976	1	Brigham Young

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
32	Crockett, Zack	RB	6-2	240	12-2-1972	9	Florida State
20	Fargas, Justin	RB	6-1	220	1-25-1980	1	USC
44	Hetherington, Chris	RB	6-3	245	11-27-1972	8	Yale
27	Redmond, J.R.	RB	5-11	215	9-28-1977	4	Arizona State
47	Wheatley, Tyrone	RB	6-1	235	1-19-1972	9	Michigan

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
81	Brown, Tim	WR	6-1	195	7-22-1966	16	Notre Dame
	Cole, Chris	WR	6-1	195	11-12-1977	3	Texas A&M
89	Curry, Ronald	WR	6-2	220	5-28-1979	2	North Carolina
85	Gabriel, Doug	WR	6-2	215	8-27-1980	1	UCF
82	Johnson, Teyo	TE	6-5	260	11-29-1981	1	Stanford
88	Jolley, Doug	TE	6-4	250	1-2-1979	2	Brigham Young
84	Porter, Jerry	WR	6-2	220	7-14-1978	4	West Virginia
80	Rice, Jerry	WR	6-2	200	10-13-1962	19	Mississippi Valley
86	Stone, John	WR	5-11	180	7-7-1979	1	Wake Forest
87	Whitted, Alvis	WR	6-1	185	9-4-1974	6	North Carolina State
	Williams, Roland	TE	6-5	265	4-27-1975	6	Syracuse

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
91	Brayton, Tyler	DE	6-6	280	11-20-1979	1	Colorado
75	Cooper, Chris	DE	6-5	275	12-27-1977	3	Nebraska-Omaha
98	Gbaja-Biamila, Akbar	DE	6-5	270	5-6-1979	1	San Diego State
	Grant, DeLawrence	DE	6-3	280	11-18-1979	3	Oregon State
96	Irons, Grant	DE	6-5	265	7-7-1979	2	Notre Dame
95	Nugent, David	DE	6-4	295	10-27-1977	3	Purdue
97	Parrella, John	DT	6-3	300	11-22-1969	11	Nebraska
55	Pierson, Shurron	DE	6-2	250	5-31-1982	1	South Florida
	Sands, Terdell	DT	6-7	337	10-31-1979	1	Chattanooga
99	Sapp, Warren	DT	6-2	303	12-19-1972	9	Miami (FL)
76	Setzer, Bobby	DE	6-4	275	6-16-1976	2	Boise State
92	Washington, Ted	DT	6-5	365	4-13-1968	13	Louisville
54	Williams, Sam	DE	6-5	265	7-28-1980	1	Fresno State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Asomugha, Nnamdi	CB	6-3	215	7-6-1981	1	California
34	Buchanan, Ray	CB	5-9	186	9-29-1971	11	Louisville
31	Buchanon, Phillip	CB	5-10	185	9-19-1980	2	Miami (FL)
	Charlton, Ike	CB	5-11	199	10-6-1977	4	Virginia Tech
36	Gibson, Derrick	S	6-2	215	3-22-1979	3	Florida State
38	Love, Clarence	CB	5-10	180	6-16-1976	4	Toledo
37	Scott, Carey	S	5-11	214	8-11-1978	2	Kentucky State
38	Shepherd, Jacoby	CB	6-2	204	8-31-1979	3	Oklahoma State
	Walker, Denard	CB	6-1	198	8-9-1973	7	LSU
24	Woodson, Charles	CB	6-1	200	10-7-1976	6	Michigan
26	Woodson, Rod	S	5-11	205	3-10-1965	17	Purdue

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
56	Brooks, Bobby	LB	6-2	240	3-3-1976	3	Fresno State
55	Clark, Danny	LB	6-2	248	5-9-1977	4	Illinois
52	Green, Donny	LB	6-2	240	9-18-1977	1	Virginia
58	Harris, Napoleon	LB	6-2	255	2-25-1979	2	Northwestern
51	Johnson, Tim	LB	6-1	240	2-7-1978	2	Youngstown State
57	Rudd, Dwayne	LB	6-2	235	2-3-1976	7	Alabama
56	Smith, Travian	LB	6-4	240	8-26-1975	6	Oklahoma

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
11	Janikowski, Sebastian	K	6-2	255	3-3-1978	4	Florida State
9	Lechler, Shane	P	6-2	225	8-7-1976	4	Texas A&M

TOMASSO DEROSA

PAUL JASIENSKI

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Rich Gannon
FB	Zack Crockett
RB	Tyrone Wheatley
LT	Robert Gallery
LG	Frank Middleton
C	Barret Robbins
RG	Ron Stone
RT	Langston Walker
TE	Teyo Johnson
WR	Jerry Rice
WR	Tim Brown

DEFENSE

LE	Warren Sapp
NT	Ted Washington
RE	John Parrella
OLB	Tyler Brayton
ILB	Dwayne Rudd
ILB	Napoleon Harris
OLB	Tim Johnson
LCB	Charles Woodson
RCB	Phillip Buchanon
SS	Derrick Gibson
FS	Anthony Dorsett

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Shane Lechler
K	Sebastian Janikowski
PR	Phillip Buchanon
KR	Alvis Whitted

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	2	Gallery, Robert	T	6-7	323	7-26-80	Iowa
2	13	Grove, Jake	C	6-3	300	1-22-80	Virginia Tech
3	4	Schweigert, Stuart	S	6-1	212	6-21-81	Purdue
4	3	Francis, Carlos	WR	5-9	198	1-3-81	Texas Tech
5	2	Morant, Johnnie	WR	6-4	229	12-07-81	Syracuse
6	1	Johnson, Shawn	DE	6-4	273	3-24-80	Delaware
6	17	Spencer, Cody	LB	6-2	242	6-1-81	North Texas
7	44	Anderson, Courtney	TE	6-6	269	11-19-80	San Jose State
7	54	Sommersell, Andre	LB	6-2	227	6-26-80	Colorado State

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	@ Pittsburgh	
Sept. 12		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 2	vs. Buffalo	
Sept. 19		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 3	vs Tampa Bay	
Sept. 26		8:30
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 4	@ Houston	
Oct. 3		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 5	@ Indianapolis	
Oct. 10		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 6	vs. Denver	
Oct. 17		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 7	vs. New Orleans	
Oct. 24		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 8	@ San Diego	
Oct. 31		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 9	@ Carolina	
Nov. 7		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 10	OPEN DATE	
WEEK 11	vs. San Diego	
Nov. 21		4:05
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 12	@ Denver	
Nov. 28		8:30
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 13	vs. Kansas City	
Dec. 5		4:05
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 14	@ Atlanta	
Dec. 12		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 15	vs Tennessee	
Dec. 19		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 16	@ Kansas City	
Dec. 25		5:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 17	vs. Jacksonville	
Jan. 2		4:15
W / L	Score:	

All times Eastern

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 4 2003 RECORD: 4-12

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Kevin Dyson, WR** (CAR)
- **Steve Foley, LB** (HOU)
- **Randall Godfrey, LB** (SEA)
- **Mike Goff, C** (CIN)
- **Leander Jordan, OT** (JAX)

STADIUM FACTS

Qualcomm Stadium

Capacity: **70,000** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **619-220-8497**
Web site: **www.chargers.com**

Avg. Attendance **59,879**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **85.5**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$46.82**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$8.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$2.25**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$4.25 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.75 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Prior to the 2004 draft, Marty Domres and Ryan Leaf were the only quarterbacks ever selected by the Chargers in the first round. Between them, they threw 41 touchdowns and 86 interceptions in their NFL careers.

STAT: Despite playing in just seven games in 2003, quarterback Doug Flutie was San Diego's second-best rusher, finishing with 168 yards and two touchdowns.

LOOK IT UP: With 1,645 rushing yards and exactly 100 receptions last season, LaDainian Tomlinson became the first 1,000-100 man (rushing yards and receptions) in NFL history.

THE COUNT:
8.75 – Chargers' NFL-worst average yards to go on second down last season.
94.3 – Opponent passer rating allowed by the Chargers in 2003, highest in the NFL.

Rivers will have a hard time flowing through Bolts' plethora of wide-open holes

Do-everything Tomlinson only bright spot in dim outlook

No playoffs since 1995. No winning season since 1995. Then the Eli Manning fiasco. How much more could one person want to know about this sagging franchise?

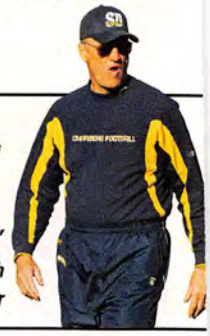
It's not as if the Chargers don't have some talent, but they routinely fail to marshal it in positive ways or extract the maximum from the more gifted players. Many of the problems can be traced to the longstanding void at quarterback that at least may now be over with the acquisition of Philip Rivers after Manning spurned the Bolts.

Marty Schottenheimer held on to his job but cannot go much further without a turnaround. And then there's the uncertainty about where this team is going in another sense—into a new stadium in San Diego, or one in Los Angeles or general oblivion.

Offensive line — Grade: C-

A major overhaul here. This group will be a work-in-progress, maybe right through the season. Three starters became unrestricted free agents and the Chargers showed no interest in keeping any of them. Adios to Damion McIntosh, Vaughn Parker and Cory Raymer. If this line has a strength, it's at center, with Jason Ball. Mike Goff is a nice pickup and a tough run-blocker at right guard. The remaining spots will be filled by a grab bag that includes holdovers Toniu Fonoti, Phil Bogle and Courtney Van Buren, plus free-agent pickup Leander Jordan.

He said it:



"I don't see any need for change other than try to find more ways to communicate what we're trying to get them to do more effectively."
—Chargers coach Marty Schottenheimer

Quentin Jammer, CB

TOP TO BOTTOM: ROBERT SEALE/SPORTING NEWS/ICON SMI; MICHAEL ZITO/SPORTSCHROME

Quarterbacks

Grade: D

Maybe Rivers, who lacks a big arm but has all the other parts, succeeds where others flopped. He'll take a beating behind that line as he learns his craft. And he won't exactly have gifted receivers. Ouch. Drew Brees came undone in the season in which he should have emerged. He seemed unable to lead the team, got pulled from two games and benched for five others. Doug Flutie remains a valuable asset coming off the bench.

Running backs

Grade: A

LaDainian Tomlinson deserves better. He might be the NFL's best all-around running back, but who ever sees him? He's a breakaway threat, a workhorse, a terrific receiver. No other running back ever rushed for 1,000 yards and caught 100 passes in the same season. But he's not enough by himself to carry this team, despite his scoring 17 touchdowns. A key component in Tomlinson's success is fullback Lorenzo Neal, a hammer of a blocking back. But there's not much else here.

Receivers

Grade: D

There's little to get excited about here and that's a pity. David Boston led the team in receiving yards but grumbled early and couldn't really use his skills in an offense that pass-protected poorly. The Chargers traded him to Miami. Goodbye, go-to guy. Reche Caldwell has done nothing but struggle with injuries and his own lack of consistency. Speedy Tim Dwight lends periodic bursts of excitement but is undersized and more of a third receiver and novelty.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	322.9	14
Rushing	134.1	6
Passing	188.8	19
Scoring	313	16
Punt Returns	8.0	21
Kick Returns	21.5	14
Red Zone TD %	47.8	18
Total Defense	349.6	27
Against Rush	138.6	25T
Against Pass	210.9	21
Points Allowed	441	31
Interceptions	13	25T
Sacks	30	25
Turnover Diff.	-11	28T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
290	117	146	27

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
46	186	22	10

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
16	21	1	1

CHARGERS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **DAN FOUTS**
   Career Passing Yards: **43,040**
   Career TD Passes: **254**
2. **JOHN HADL**
   Career Passing Yards: **33,503**
   Career TD Passes: **244**
3. **STAN HUMPHRIES**
   Career Passing Yards: **17,191**
   Career TD Passes: **89**

FINALSHOT/JRP

Second-year Antonio Gates shows promise at tight end, where the Chargers parted with highly paid but oft-injured Stephen Alexander. Kevin Dyson is merely a body.

Defensive line

Grade: C-

Another area in flux. Who's going to rush the passer? Marcellus Wiley was supposed to be the guy but proved way too soft and not worth the $9 million signing bonus he received. So even with his old defensive coordinator, Wade Phillips, coming aboard, the Chargers dumped him. They must look at replacing defensive tackle Jason Fisk, who was primarily a backup everywhere else he has played. The 340-pound Jamal Williams looks like the nose tackle. Otis Leverette is a starter at left end until someone else comes along. The Chargers surely will find playing time for rookie Igor Olshansky.

Linebackers

Grade: B-

The Chargers flipped Donnie Edwards from the middle to the weakside and he responded with a Pro Bowl-caliber season. Now, as the club shifts to a 3-4, he's moving back inside. Edwards will pair with free-agent signee Randall Godfrey, an active player who is starting to show some wear. He's with his third team in three seasons. Ben Leber and free-agent pickup Steve Foley become the starting outside 'backers. Foley, like Godfrey, has had some problems staying healthy. Experience should not be an issue, but staying on the field might.

Secondary

Grade: C

The Chargers needed some veteran leadership and lost it when strong safety

Multitalented Tomlinson carries heavy burden in inconsistent Charger offense

With the Cincinnati Bengals on the upswing and the Arizona Cardinals optimistic about the arrival of new coach Dennis Green, the San Diego Chargers perhaps now rank as the league's most hapless franchise.

The Chargers have lost 11 or more games in five of the last seven seasons. Aside from a five-year period under Bobby Ross in the mid-1990s, they've endured two decades of misery.

How bad might the Bolts be without LaDainian Tomlinson? And how good might Tomlinson be on a better team?

Last season, Tomlinson became the first NFL player to catch 100 passes and rush for at least 1,000 yards in the same season. He finished with 1,645 yards rushing and 100 catches for 725 yards, breaking his own franchise record for total yards from scrimmage with 2,370.

He did it despite running behind an offensive line so decimated by injuries it started nine different lineups. He did it despite quarterback Drew Brees struggling in his first season as a full-time starter, allowing teams to focus on defending the run. He did it despite having to carry the load for an underachieving receiving corps.

"I've been in this league a long time, both as a player and a coach, and he's the finest running back that I've ever seen or ever competed against," San Diego coach Marty Schottenheimer says.

Even with Tomlinson, the Chargers ranked just 14th in total offense and 16th in scoring. The defense ranked 27th in total yards and 30th in point differential, getting outscored by an average of eight per game.

For the second time in four years, the Chargers earned the top selection in the NFL Draft, though they've squandered high picks in the past. Whatever happens with rookie QB Philip Rivers, they know Tomlinson will continue to get better. With tremendous physical skills, a tireless work ethic and drive to improve, he could shoulder even more of the load in 2004.

Of course, he'd like to share some of the burden and see the long-suffering franchise begin to improve.

"We'll see how it goes," Tomlinson says. "I believe with some additions we can possibly turn things around."

—Pete Williams

LaDainian Tomlinson

DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 4, Lost 12

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	27-14	at Kansas City
09/14	L	37-13	Denver
09/21	L	24-10	Baltimore
09/28	L	34-31 (OT)	at Oakland
10/05	L	27-21	at Jacksonville
10/19	W	26-20	at Cleveland
10/27	L	26-10	Miami
11/02	L	20-7	at Chicago
11/09	W	42-28	Minnesota
11/16	L	37-8	at Denver
11/23	L	34-27	Cincinnati
11/30	L	28-24	Kansas City
12/07	W	14-7	at Detroit
12/14	L	38-21	Green Bay
12/21	L	40-24	at Pittsburgh
12/28	W	21-14	Oakland

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Tomlinson	313	1645	5.3	73t	13
Flutie	33	168	5.1	17	2
Dwight	9	88	9.8	20	0
Brees	21	84	4.0	18	0
Neal	18	40	2.2	7	1
Caldwell	5	39	7.8	14	0
L. Johnson	4	26	6.5	18	0
E. Parker	3	21	7.0	13	0
Boston	3	18	6.0	13	0
Chatman	8	17	2.1	6	0
Chargers	**417**	**2146**	**5.1**	**73t**	**16**
Opponents	**518**	**2218**	**4.3**	**58**	**12**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Tomlinson	100	725	7.3	73t	4
Boston	70	880	12.6	46t	7
Gates	24	389	16.2	48	2
E. Parker	18	244	13.6	33t	3
Peelle	16	133	8.3	24	1
Neal	16	62	3.9	11	0
Dwight	14	193	13.8	32	0
Osgood	13	278	21.4	57t	2
Caldwell	8	80	10.0	15	0
Gilliam	6	95	15.8	37	0
Norman	6	72	12.0	21t	1
Chatman	5	54	10.8	23	0
Brees	1	21	21.0	21t	1
Chargers	**297**	**3226**	**10.9**	**73t**	**21**
Opponents	**322**	**3575**	**11.1**	**60t**	**36**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Brees	356	205	2108	11	15
Flutie	167	91	1097	9	4
Bennett	1	0	0	0	0
Tomlinson	1	1	21	1	0
Chargers	**525**	**297**	**3226**	**21**	**19**
Opponents	**524**	**322**	**3575**	**36**	**13**

SACKS

Scott 6.5, Dingle 6.0, R. Johnson 4.0, Leber 3.0, Wiley 3.0, Moreno 2.0, Cooper 1.0, Fisk 1.0, Leverette 1.0, Williams 1.0, Wilson 1.0, Edwards 0.5

Chargers 30.0, Opponents 29.0

t=touchdown

STAN LIU/ICON SMI

Tim Dwight, WR

Kwamie Lassiter went down with a knee injury. The rest of the group was very young after the club went heavy in the draft for young corners. Quentin Jammer and Sammy Davis should become capable starting cornerbacks after rough initiations; but they need some pressure up front, as no one can cover forever. The Chargers have some depth here and most of the talent is still feeling its way, a problem complicated by the installation of a new scheme.

Special teams

Grade: C-

The kicking situation could look entirely different. Longtime punter Darren Bennett departed, more because of salary issues than performance. The Chargers really don't know who their kicker will be but drafted Nate Kaeding of Iowa in the third round, so why not him? Mike Scifres figures as Bennett's replacement. Leon Johnson is adequate on returns and the Chargers also will look at Eric Parker. The Chargers fielded more kickoffs than any team last year (90) and were the worst at establishing defensive field position when they kicked off. That must be addressed.

Management

Grade: D

General Manager A.J. Smith replaced John Butler after his longtime friend and associate's death. He could not have handled the Manning mess with less aplomb and, around the league, is considered a short-timer. Coach Marty Schottenheimer seems to have spent most of his days in San Diego (and his one season with Washington) alienating the players. He's an unrepentant tough guy who needs to get young guys to buy into his methods. It isn't happening. This is one troubled team.

Bottom line

This franchise is a mess from top to bottom and the best place to start sorting through the wreckage is anybody's guess. Tomlinson is the lone stud on the offensive side and it is truly amazing to look back at what he achieved in 2003 on so poor a team. Don't expect miracles from Rivers with so little experience and few other quality components to work with. Defensively, the Chargers lack stoppers and playmakers. They'll rely on the old Phillips staple of bending but not breaking—except this team could actually snap in half. It's difficult to picture Schottenheimer getting this thing turned around enough so that he can save his job. The Chargers are years away from being a year away.

CHARGERS ROSTER

Marty Schottenheimer, head coach

Tim Brewster, asst. head coach/tight ends; **Cam Cameron,** offensive coord.; **Pete Carmichael, Jr.,** offensive asst.-quality control; **Steve Crosby,** special teams; **Hudson Houck,** offensive line; **Wade Phillips,** defensive coord.; **James Lofton,** wide receivers; **Greg Manusky,** linebackers; **Wayne Nunnely,** defensive line; **John Pagano,** defensive asst.-quality control; **Brian Schottenheimer,** quarterbacks; **Clarence Shelmon,** running backs, **Brian Stewart,** secondary

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
9	Brees, Drew	QB	6-1	221	1-15-1979	3	Purdue
7	Flutie, Doug	QB	5-10	180	10-23-1962	10	Boston College

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
60	Ball, Jason	C	6-2	301	3-21-1979	2	New Hampshire
50	Binn, David	C	6-3	245	2-6-1972	10	California
64	Bogle, Phil	T	6-2	332	9-27-1979	1	New Haven
65	Brandt, David	C	6-4	300	9-25-1977	1	Michigan
68	Dielman, Kris	G	6-4	310	2-3-1981	1	Indiana
71	Fonoti, Toniu	G	6-4	349	11-26-1981	1	Nebraska
63	Goff, Mike	G	6-5	306	1-6-1976	6	Iowa
76	Jordan, Leander	T	6-4	322	9-15-1977	2	Indiana (PA)
72	Van Buren, Courtney	T	6-5	350	2-22-1980	1	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
71	Ward, Chad	G	6-4	321	1-12-1977	0	Washington

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
34	Chapman, Doug	RB	5-10	213	8-22-1977	3	Marshall
24	Chatman, Jesse	RB	5-8	215	9-22-1979	2	Eastern Washington
35	Johnson, Leon	RB	6-1	222	7-13-1974	7	North Carolina
41	Neal, Lorenzo	RB	5-11	245	12-27-1970	11	Fresno State
30	Pinnock, Andrew	RB	5-10	260	3-12-1980	1	South Carolina
21	Tomlinson, LaDainian	RB	5-10	221	6-23-1979	3	Texas Christian

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
82	Caldwell, Reche	WR	5-11	194	3-28-1979	2	Florida
87	Dwight, Tim	WR	5-9	180	7-13-1975	6	Iowa
	Dyson, Kevin	WR	6-1	208	6-23-1975	6	Utah
85	Gates, Antonio	TE	6-4	260	6-18-1980	1	Kent State
86	Mattos, Grant	WR	6-2	220	3-12-1981	1	USC
83	Norman, Josh	TE	6-2	236	7-27-1980	2	Oklahoma
81	Osgood, Kassim	WR	6-5	209	5-20-1980	1	San Diego State
88	Parker, Eric	WR	6-1	180	4-14-1979	2	Tennessee
84	Peelle, Justin	TE	6-4	255	3-15-1979	2	Oregon
11	Ross, Micah	WR	6-2	221	1-13-1976	3	Jacksonville

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
97	Ballard, Clenton	DT	6-3	315	4-17-1979	0	Southwest Texas State
74	Cesaire, Jacques	DT	6-2	295	8-30-1980	1	Southern Connecticut St.
90	Dingle, Adrian	DE	6-3	272	6-25-1977	5	Clemson
92	Fisk, Jason	DT	6-3	295	9-4-1972	9	Stanford
91	Hand, Omari	DE	6-4	265	7-3-1980	1	Tennessee
93	Leverette, Otis	DE	6-6	278	5-31-1978	3	UAB
78	Scott, Dequincy	DT	6-1	280	3-5-1978	2	Southern Mississippi
76	Williams, Jamal	DT	6-3	340	4-28-1976	6	Oklahoma State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
22	Davis, Sammy	CB	6-1	190	4-8-1980	1	Texas A&M
21	Fletcher, Jamar	CB	5-9	186	8-28-1979	3	Wisconsin
29	Florence, Drayton	CB	6-1	195	12-19-1980	1	Tuskegee
36	Fox, Vernon	S	5-9	200	10-9-1979	2	Fresno State
32	House, Kevin	CB	6-1	185	1-9-1979	2	South Carolina
23	Jammer, Quentin	CB	6-1	204	6-19-1979	2	Texas
48	Kiel, Terrence	S	5-11	207	11-24-1980	1	Texas A&M
42	Lassiter, Kwamie	S	6-1	207	12-3-1969	9	Kansas
31	Milligan, Hanik	S	6-2	200	11-3-1979	0	Houston
34	Okanlawon, Tony	CB	5-11	187	3-4-1979	1	Maryland
20	Wilson, Jerry	S	5-10	190	7-17-1973	8	Southern University

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
54	Cooper, Stephen	LB	6-1	235	6-19-1979	1	Maine
59	Edwards, Donnie	LB	6-2	227	4-6-1973	8	UCLA
58	Foley, Steve	LB	6-3	260	9-11-1975	5	Louisiana-Monroe
53	Godfrey, Randall	LB	6-2	245	4-6-1973	8	Georgia
51	Leber, Ben	LB	6-3	244	12-7-1978	2	Kansas State
57	Moreno, Zeke	LB	6-2	246	10-10-1978	3	Southern California
52	Polk, Carlos	LB	6-2	250	2-22-1977	3	Nebraska
54	Waddy, Jude	LB	6-2	230	9-12-1975	2	William & Mary
56	Wilhelm, Matt	LB	6-4	245	2-2-1981	1	Ohio State

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
5	Scifres, Mike	P	6-2	236	10-8-1980	1	Western Illinois

DENIS POROY/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

NEWMAN LOWRANCE

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Philip Rivers
FB	Lorenzo Neal
RB	LaDainian Tomlinson
LT	Leander Jordan
LG	Phil Bogle
C	Jason Ball
RG	Mike Goff
RT	Courtney Van Buren
TE	Antonio Gates
WR	Reche Caldwell
WR	Tim Dwight

DEFENSE

LE	Otis Leverette
NT	Jamal Williams
RE	Adrian Dingle
OLB	Ben Leber
ILB	Randall Godfrey
ILB	Donnie Edwards
OLB	Steve Foley
LCB	Quentin Jammer
RCB	Sammy Davis
SS	Terrence Kiel
FS	Jerry Wilson

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Mike Scifres
K	Nate Kaeding
PR	Eric Parker
KR	Leon Johnson

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ Houston	
Sept. 12	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 2 vs. New York Jets	
Sept. 19	4:15
Score:	

WEEK 3 @ Denver	
Sept. 26	4:05
Score:	

WEEK 4 vs. Tennessee	
Oct. 3	4:15
Score:	

WEEK 5 vs. Jacksonville	
Oct. 10	4:05
Score:	

WEEK 6 @ Atlanta	
Oct. 17	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 7 @ Carolina	
Oct. 24	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 8 vs. Oakland	
Oct. 31	4:15
Score:	

WEEK 9 vs. New Orleans	
Nov. 7	4:05
Score:	

WEEK 10 OPEN DATE

WEEK 11 @ Oakland	
Nov. 21	4:05
Score:	

WEEK 12 @ Kansas City	
Nov. 28	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 13 vs. Denver	
Dec. 5	4:05
Score:	

WEEK 14 vs. Tampa Bay	
Dec. 12	4:15
Score:	

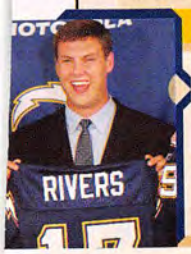
WEEK 15 @ Cleveland	
Dec. 19	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 16 @ Indianapolis	
Dec. 26	1:00
Score:	

WEEK 17 vs. Kansas City	
Jan. 2	4:15
Score:	

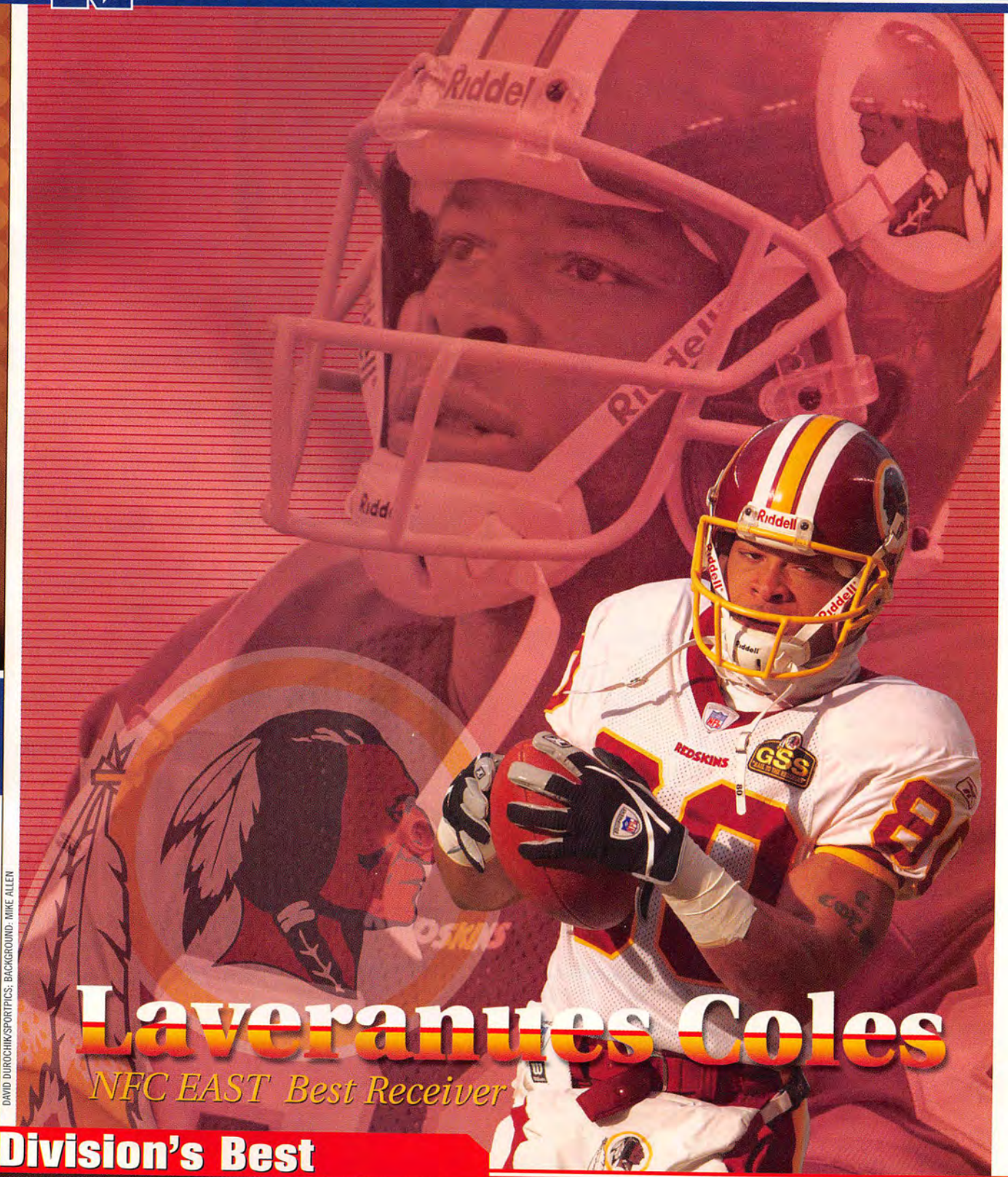
All times Eastern

AFC EAST | AFC NORTH | AFC SOUTH | **AFC WEST** | NFC EAST | NFC NORTH | NFC SOUTH | NFC WEST



2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	1	Rivers, Philip	QB	6-4	226	12-8-81	North Carolina St.
2	3	Olshansky, Igor	DT	6-5	309	5-3-82	Oregon
3	2	Kaeding, Nate	K	6-1	187	3-26-82	Iowa
3	3	Hardwick, Nick	C	6-3	283	3-12-81	Purdue
4	2	Phillips, Shaun	DE	6-2	252	5-13-81	Purdue
5	1	Ball, Dave	DE	6-5	277	1-4-81	UCLA
5	22	Turner, Michael	RB	5-10	237	2-13-82	Northern Illinois
6	4	Krause, Ryan	TE	6-2	244	6-16-81	Nebraska-Omaha
7	3	Bingham, Ryon	DT	6-3	303	6-6-81	Nebraska
7	8	Olivea, Shane	T	6-2	312	10-7-81	Ohio State
7	53	Joseph, Carlos	T	6-6	342	7-14-80	Miami (FL)



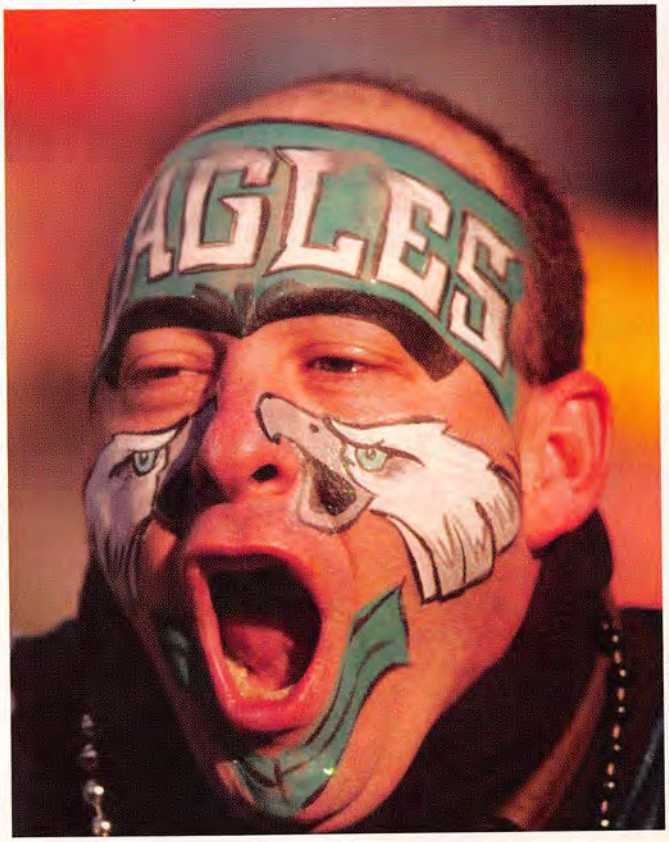
Laveranues Coles

NFC EAST Best Receiver

DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS; BACKGROUND: MIKE ALLEN

Division's Best

BIG-GAME PLAYER	RUSHER	RECEIVER	TACKLER	SPECIAL-TEAMS WARRIOR
Michael Strahan, DE New York	**Clinton Portis, RB Washington**	**Laveranues Coles, WR Washington**	**Dat Nguyen, LB Dallas**	**Ike Reese, LB Philadelphia**
Through thick and thin, you want him on your side.	There's nobody close to this newcomer in the division.	His numbers were slightly ahead of Terrell Owens last year.	He made Bill Parcells a true believer.	Hasn't missed a regular-season game for six years, during which he has led team in special-teams tackles.



ROB TRINGALI/SPORTSCHROME

Eagles fans are hoping a fourth straight trip to the NFC title game will produce that elusive Super Bowl trip.

It's the Redskins' turn in 'one-upsmanship' division to challenge Andy and the Eagles

By Don Pierson, Chicago Tribune

This is the one-upmanship division. First, Washington owner Daniel Snyder talks Steve Spurrier into coaching in the NFL. Then Dallas owner Jerry Jones talks Bill Parcells into returning. Now Snyder talks Joe Gibbs into coming back after 11 years away.

What's next? Do the New York Giants resurrect their great coaching staff of Jim Lee Howell, Tom Landry and Vince Lombardi? Not yet. They hired former Jacksonville coach Tom Coughlin, also a proven winner in a division full of them.

All continue to chase Philadelphia coach Andy Reid, who has won three NFC East titles in a row and has no plans to quit knocking on the Super Bowl door.

1. PHILADELPHIA EAGLES page 116

After three strikes in the NFC title game, the Eagles still don't believe they are out. Adding pass rusher Jevon Kearse and pass catcher Terrell Owens will have a dramatic effect. The Eagles just aren't sure yet whether it will be comedy or tragedy. They hope they have the last laugh.

If Donovan McNabb keeps pushing, there is no other quarterback in the division more prepared to lead his team to a Super Bowl. And if Reid can't get there this time, he may run out of explanations.

2. WASHINGTON REDSKINS page 120

Snyder also won the offseason-signing derby, as usual. This time may be the charm. He traded for Clinton Portis, who immediately becomes the best running back in the division. He also traded for quarterback Mark Brunell, who will either make Patrick Ramsey a better player or play himself.

Gibbs hired ex-Buffalo head coach Gregg Williams to run his defense, worst in the division last year. Turnarounds are Gibbs' specialty and this is his biggest challenge. He was the best coach of his time and Snyder is gambling his time has not passed.

3. DALLAS COWBOYS page 124

After surprising everybody including themselves with a playoff run, the Cowboys could improve and still slide a bit in the standings. There was no reason for them to make it last year and no reason to think Keyshawn Johnson is the lone missing piece of the Super Bowl puzzle.

The defense finished No. 1 in the league, so it takes more than defense to win championships. Parcells knows he must get better at quarterback and running back to continue to contend. If Quincy Carter doesn't make another leap, look for the Cowboys to start over with Drew Henson.

4. NEW YORK GIANTS page 128

Coughlin, of course, doesn't expect to bring up the rear in any division. But there are no awful teams in the NFC East and only the Giants plan to start over with a rookie quarterback.

The dawn of the Eli Manning era will be well-chronicled and worth following, but nobody has delusions of grandeur, only memories of other rookie struggles. The biggest thing Manning has going for him is his willing attitude. He chose New York as much as the Giants chose him. It's more than an arranged marriage.

TEAMMATE	SENSE OF HUMOR	INTELLECT	SIDELINE STRATEGIST	FRONT-OFFICE EXECUTIVE
Dan Campbell, TE Dallas	**Rich Seubert, G New York**	**Jon Ritchie, FB Philadelphia**	**Bill Parcells, head coach Dallas**	**Andy Reid, head coach/ VP of football operations Philadelphia**
Became instant leader on and off field upon arrival from Giants.	Reputation as practical joker will get tested under button-down coach Tom Coughlin.	Stanford English grad writes sports column, so must be very smart.	With Joe Gibbs and Tom Coughlin joining Parcells and Andy Reid, this is thinking-coach's division.	Landing Jevon Kearse *and* Terrell Owens was a coup.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 1 2003 RECORD: 12-4

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Dhani Jones, LB** (NYG)
- **Jevon Kearse, DE** (TEN)
- **Terrell Owens, WR** (trade, SF)

STADIUM FACTS

Lincoln Financial Field

Capacity: **68,532** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **215-463-5500**
Web site: **www.philadelphiaeagles.com**

Avg. Attendance **68,044**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **98.6**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$64.00**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.75 / 24oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.00 / 21oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: The Eagles have played 43 consecutive seasons without winning a Super Bowl, NFL championship or AFL championship. Only the Cardinals (56 years) and Lions (46 years) have longer current championship droughts.

STAT: Donovan McNabb ranked last in the NFL in passer rating through Oct. 31 (54.8) of last year, but first in passer rating from Nov. 1 to the end of the regular season (99.6).

LOOK IT UP: On Oct. 19, 2003, Brian Westbrook became just the fourth player since 1980 to score a rushing touchdown and punt-return touchdown in the same game.

THE COUNT:
1 – Receptions by Eagles' starting wide receivers in the NFC Championship Game.
0:00 – Total time that Philly led in its two playoff games last season.
32 – Touchdowns scored by Eagles running backs in 2003, most of any team.

Additions of T.O. and The Freak could give Eagles the juice they need for a Super Bowl trip

But loss of free-agent DBs Vincent and Taylor will hurt

Since the third time failed to charm the Eagles into the Super Bowl, coach Andy Reid's gang is trotting out another rallying cry: If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again.

If you buy the argument the Eagles fell only a few big plays short in three straight NFC title games, this year's addition of pass rusher Jevon Kearse and pass catcher Terrell Owens may be just what the Philly fans ordered.

Reid scoffs at the notion that time is running out on his chances.

"I heard that last year, and I heard it the year before," he says. "Every year's different. The players will be excited to compete. I'm not big on the 'window' theory.'"

TOP TO BOTTOM: DREW HALLOWELL/ICON SMI; JON ADAMS/ICON SMI

Terrell Owens, WR

Offensive line

Grade: B-

After looking so solid up front that they let veteran guard Bobbie Williams sign with Cincinnati, the Eagles moved way up in the first round of the draft to land huge tackle/guard Shawn Andrews. Reid said it had nothing to do with left guard John Welbourn's outburst in a contract dispute, but the next day Welbourn was traded.

Artis Hicks and Andrews will fight it out in camp to replace Welbourn. Right guard Jermane Mayberry returns after an elbow injury. Tackles Tra Thomas and Jon Runyan and center Hank Fraley all return, with Jeremy Bridges and Alonzo Ephraim in reserve and three second-day draft choices on tap. Reid says he doesn't believe in windows, but time is obviously expiring for his veteran offensive line.

Quarterbacks

Grade: B+

Owens said he wanted to play with Donovan McNabb, partly because McNabb wanted to play with Owens. The Eagles' lack of big-play ability at receiver was evident in the playoffs, yet McNabb still must prove he is an accurate downfield passer.

After raising his passer rating in each of his first four years, McNabb slid a bit last season to the middle of the pack. Still reluctant to run because he wants to establish his reputation as a passer, McNabb is more dangerous when he doesn't forget to also make plays with his feet. His five-yard rushing average was also a career low.

With A.J. Feeley traded to Miami, Koy Detmer remains the top backup, although Reid likes sixth-rounder Andy Hall of Delaware.

He said it:

"When you go out and add a Terrell Owens and a Jevon Kearse to the mix, it helps everything. I look around here and I know that we are a hungry team."
—Eagles WR Freddie Mitchell

Running backs

Grade: B

Duce Staley ran off to Pittsburgh, so the Eagles are counting on a healthy combination of Correll Buckhalter and Brian Westbrook to maintain their ranking as a top-10 rushing team. Buckhalter and Westbrook split carries almost evenly. The blocking of Jon Ritchie helps and rookie Thomas Tapeh will get a shot, but the injury that cost Westbrook the playoffs was devastating. Reno Mahe is also in the mix.

Westbrook not only averaged 5.2 yards a rush, he also led the team with four touchdown catches. But he needs Buckhalter to share the heavy lifting.

Receivers

Grade: B+

Owens will gladly accept the tag as go-to guy. In fact, he demands it, which is good news until he gets down on himself or fickle Philly fans turn on him after dropped pass. The Eagles traded last year's leading receiver, James Thrash, back to the Redskins. They hope Todd Pinkston finds a niche as a No. 2 receiver and Freddie Mitchell continues to develop in the slot.

The receivers, including tight ends L.J. Smith and Chad Lewis, caught only seven touchdown passes last season, so Owens' mission is clear. Owens has averaged 10 touchdown catches a season over his eight-year career.

Defensive line

Grade: B+

The Eagles got no sacks from last year's top draft choice, Jerome McDougle. Kearse had 9.5 sacks with Tennessee, but never shook concerns over foot injuries.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	314.7	18
Rushing	125.9	9
Passing	188.8	20
Scoring	374	11
Punt Returns	12.2	6
Kick Returns	21.3	16
Red Zone TD %	62.7	3
Total Defense	331.7	20
Against Rush	129.4	22
Against Pass	202.3	16
Points Allowed	287	7
Interceptions	13	25T
Sacks	38	18
Turnover Diff.	+4	8

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
302	105	156	41

RED ZONE OFFENSE

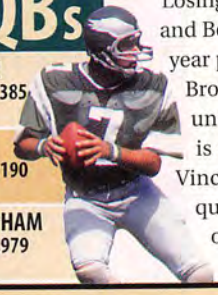
Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
51	274	32	17

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
23	17	3	1

EAGLES' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **TOMMY THOMPSON**
   Career Passing Yards: **10,385**
   Career TD Passes: **91**
2. **RON JAWORSKI**
   Career Passing Yards: **28,190**
   Career TD Passes: **179**
3. **RANDALL CUNNINGHAM**
   Career Passing Yards: **29,979**
   Career TD Passes: **207**



FINALSHOT/JRP

Losing Brandon Whiting to San Francisco in the Owens deal means McDougle and N.D. Kalu will have to come through opposite Kearse, and it's not entirely clear which side they will play. Kearse might move back to left end to protect his foot.

A healthy Derrick Burgess or tackle Hollis Thomas would be a plus. Tackle Corey Simon welcomes the addition of Kearse, as does starter Darwin Walker and plugger Paul Grasmanis. Second-year prospect Jamaal Green is also a possibility.

Linebackers

Grade: C-

Shuffling linebackers is an annual ritual for defensive coordinator Jim Johnson, who will replace productive Carlos Emmons with ex-Giant Dhani Jones on the outside. He would welcome improvement by Nate Wayne, if not a challenge from somebody else. Inside linebacker Mark Simoneau led the team in tackles, but like the others is undersized and could move outside.

Keith Adams, Tyreo Harrison and Justin Ena are reserves and mainly special-teammers.

Secondary

Grade: B-

Losing longtime cornerbacks Troy Vincent and Bobby Taylor cannot help unless third-year prospects Lito Sheppard and Sheldon Brown accelerate their development. An undrafted second-year man, Rod Hood, is also in the wings, but the loss of Vincent and Taylor is another reason that quarterback pressure from Kearse and others becomes more important.

Kalu looking for Nigerians to follow in his footsteps

N.D. Kalu's given name is Ndukwe, but he goes by N.D. because it's easier for Americans to pronounce. But don't think that Kalu has forsaken his Nigerian roots. He just wants to blend his two cultures comfortably. That's why he's preparing a proposal for Paul Tagliabue to persuade the commissioner to help fund a program teaching football to Nigerian children.

The Eagles' defensive end was born and raised in San Antonio, but his grandfather had seven wives so he has dozens of relatives back in Nigeria. Still, until last year, he hadn't gone back since he was 13. He always wanted to visit during the December holidays, but in college and throughout his pro career he has been busy playing football then. Finally, last year, he decided to go during the offseason, even though the holidays would be over.

"I saw all these kids playing soccer and saw how athletic they were and I grew curious about how they would do playing football," Kalu recalls.

So this year Kalu ran a one-day camp for several dozen Nigerian teens and twentysomethings. Another Nigerian, Miami Dolphin defensive end Adewale Ogunleye, was set to help out but got selected for the Pro Bowl.

"They had no idea what football is and I was really concerned that they'd get bored as I explained it and go back to playing soccer," Kalu says. "But I was really pleased with their excitement."

Kalu says the players had great "juke moves" and were "fearless, tackling without any pads or equipment."

But soccer skills only go so far.

"They just couldn't throw that well and only one kid could throw a spiral," he says, adding that the first time he taught them to run a sweep the running back headed toward his own end zone.

Kalu took not only the teaching but the planning to heart, taking photos and videos not only of the minicamp but of his meeting with Nigeria's minister of sports.

"We want to let the NFL know how serious we are and how exciting this could be," he says, adding that since the league is investing in countries like Japan and China, it would seem fitting to invest in Nigeria given that there are about 50 Nigerian-Americans in the NFL.

For next year, Kalu hopes to get more equipment and the money to bring over at least three other players (including a quarterback to teach passing) for a longer camp.

"There's so much red tape to deal with in a Third World country, but if anyone has the power to cut through that and make this happen it is the NFL," Kalu says.

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 12, Lost 4

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/08	L	17-0	Tampa Bay
09/14	L	31-10	New England
09/28	W	23-13	at Buffalo
10/05	W	27-25	Washington
10/12	L	23-21	at Dallas
10/19	W	14-10	at New York Giants
10/26	W	24-17	New York Jets
11/02	W	23-16	at Atlanta
11/10	W	17-14	at Green Bay
11/16	W	28-10	New York Giants
11/23	W	33-20	New Orleans
11/30	W	25-16	at Carolina
12/07	W	36-10	Dallas
12/15	W	34-27	at Miami
12/21	L	31-28 (OT)	San Francisco
12/27	W	31-7	at Washington

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Westbrook	117	613	5.2	62t	7
Buckhalter	126	542	4.3	64t	8
Staley	96	463	4.8	22	5
McNabb	71	355	5.0	34	3
Thrash	5	52	10.4	47	0
Ritchie	1	1	1.0	1	0
Pinkston	1	-11	-11.0	-11	0
Eagles	**417**	**2015**	**4.8**	**64t**	**23**
Opponents	**461**	**2071**	**4.5**	**76t**	**13**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Thrash	49	558	11.4	51	1
Westbrook	37	332	9.0	38	4
Pinkston	36	575	16.0	59	2
Staley	36	382	10.6	52t	2
Mitchell	35	498	14.2	39	2
Smith	27	321	11.9	36	1
C. Lewis	23	293	12.7	29	1
Ritchie	17	86	5.1	12	3
Buckhalter	10	133	13.3	27	1
G. Lewis	6	95	15.8	25	0
Mahe	1	5	5.0	5	0
McMullen	1	2	2.0	2	0
McNabb	1	-7	-7.0	-7	0
Eagles	**279**	**3273**	**11.7**	**59**	**17**
Opponents	**337**	**3484**	**10.3**	**60t**	**17**

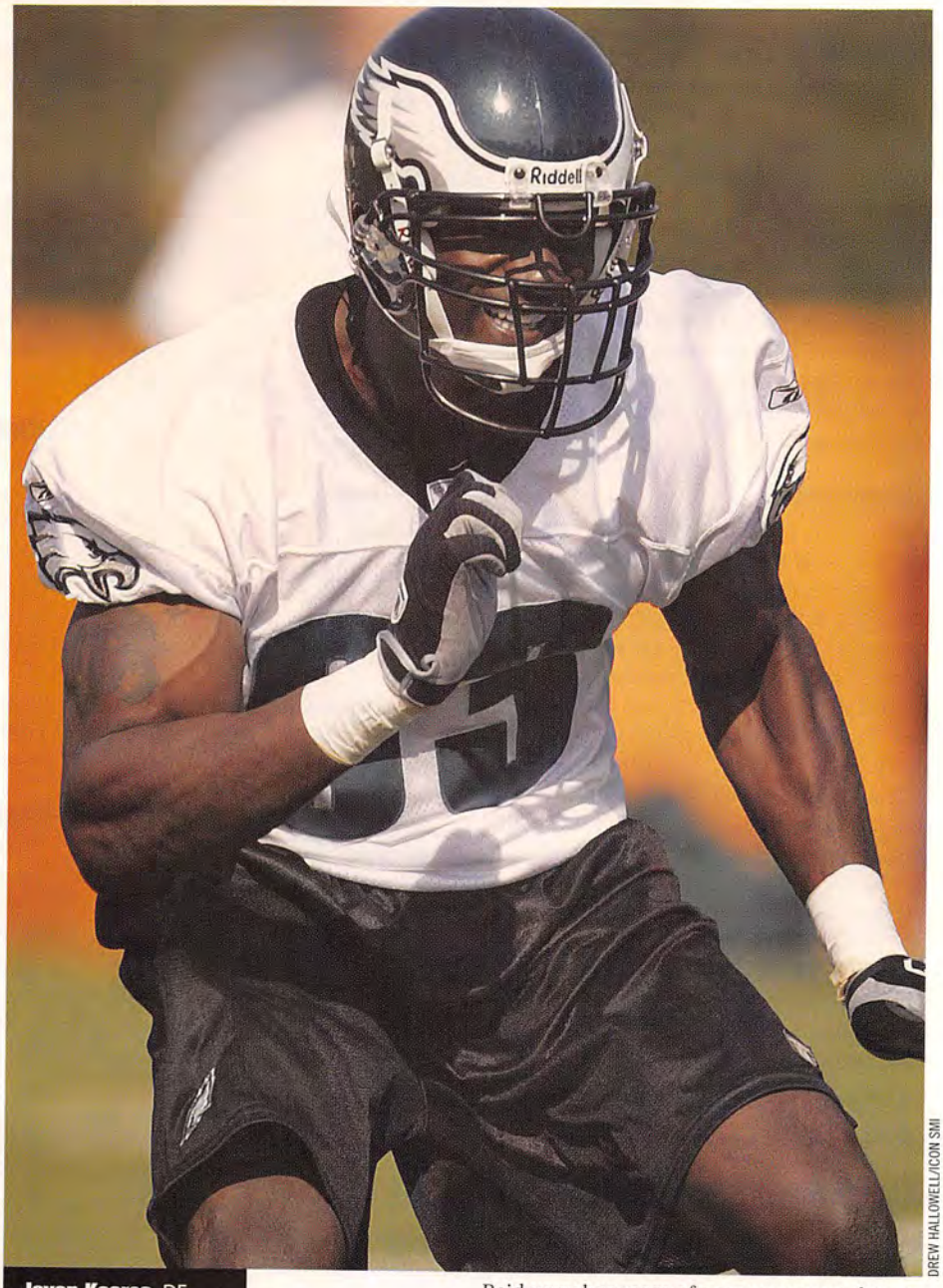
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
McNabb	478	275	3216	16	11
Detmer	5	3	32	0	0
Mitchell	1	1	25	1	0
Eagles	**484**	**279**	**3273**	**17**	**11**
Opponents	**559**	**337**	**3484**	**17**	**13**

SACKS

Simon 7.5, Walker 6.0, Kalu 5.5, Wayne 3.0, M. Lewis 2.0, Rayburn 2.0, Simoneau 2.0, Whiting 2.0, Brown 1.0, Grasmanis 1.0, Hart 1.0, Reese 1.0, Coleman 0.5, Dawkins 0.5

Eagles 38.0, Opponents 43.0

t=touchdown



DREW HALLOWELL/ICON SMI

Jevon Kearse, DE

Safeties Michael Lewis and Brian Dawkins remain solid in the middle of the field, backed by second-year men Clinton Hart and Quintin Mikell and rookies Matt Ware and J.R. Reed.

Special teams

Grade: B+

Punter Dirk Johnson should improve in his second season and kicker David Akers remains among the best despite a less-than-average season. Westbrook is outstanding but may be too valuable to the offense to risk on punt and kickoff returns. Thrash must be replaced on kickoffs. Mahe is one candidate, but respected special-teams coach John Harbaugh will take a long look at rookie Reed.

Management

Grade: A-

The Eagles strayed a bit from conventional tactics with the signings of Kearse and Owens. Reid preaches more of a team concept than a star system, so it remains to be seen how the new chemistry plays in the locker room. For now, the money spent will deflect criticism that Eagles President Joe Banner is more interested in winning the war against the salary cap than in winning the Super Bowl, although Welbourn disagrees.

Bottom line

As usual, the Eagles are poised for a run at the ring. Reid says he doesn't believe in windows of opportunity, but what else can he say? This is for sure: After three strikes, the Eagles don't appear out of it yet.

FINAL GRADE **90**

Andy Reid, head coach

Tommy Brasher, def. line; **Juan Castillo**, off. line; **Brad Childress**, off. coord.; **David Culley**, wide receivers; **John Harbaugh**, special teams; **Jim Johnson**, def. coord.; **Sean McDermott**, secondary/safeties; **Tom Melvin**, tight ends; **Marty Mornhinweg**, asst. head coach; **Mike Reed**, def. asst.; **Bill Shuey**, off. asst.-quality control; **Pat Shurmur**, QBs; **Steve Spagnuolo**, linebackers; **Ted Daisher**, special teams quality control; **Ted Williams**, RBs; **Trent Walters**, secondary

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
10	Detmer, Koy	QB	6-1	195	7-5-1973	6	Colorado
5	McNabb, Donovan	QB	6-2	240	11-25-1976	5	Syracuse

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
74	Bridges, Jeremy	T	6-4	301	4-19-1980	0	Southern Mississippi
50	Ephraim, Alonzo	C	6-4	312	11-9-1981	1	Alabama
63	Fraley, Hank	C	6-2	300	9-21-1977	3	Robert Morris
77	Hicks, Artis	T	6-4	303	11-28-1978	1	Memphis
67	Jackson, Jamaal	T	6-4	330	5-8-1980	0	Delaware State
71	Mayberry, Jermane	G	6-4	325	8-29-1973	8	Texas A&M-Kingsville
69	Runyan, Jon	T	6-7	330	11-27-1973	8	Michigan
72	Thomas, Tra	T	6-7	349	11-20-1974	6	Florida State

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
28	Buckhalter, Correll	RB	6-1	222	10-6-1978	2	Nebraska
34	Mahe, Reno	RB	5-10	195	6-3-1980	1	Brigham Young
48	Ritchie, Jon	RB	6-2	250	9-4-1974	6	Stanford

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
88	Bartrum, Mike	TE	6-4	245	6-23-1970	10	Marshall
86	Dickerson, Kori	TE	6-4	235	12-6-1978	1	USC
89	Lewis, Chad	TE	6-6	252	10-5-1971	7	Brigham Young
83	Lewis, Greg	WR	6-1	180	2-12-1980	1	Illinois
	McMullen, Billy	WR	6-4	210	3-8-1980	1	Virginia
84	Mitchell, Freddie	WR	5-11	184	11-28-1978	3	UCLA
85	Morey, Sean	WR	5-11	200	2-26-1976	2	Brown
81	Owens, Terrell	WR	6-3	226	12-7-1973	8	Chattanooga
87	Pinkston, Todd	WR	6-2	174	4-23-1977	4	Southern Mississippi
82	Smith, L.J.	TE	6-3	258	5-13-1980	1	Rutgers

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
96	Grasmanis, Paul	DT	6-3	298	8-2-1974	8	Notre Dame
65	Green, Jamaal	DE	6-1	272	6-5-1980	0	Miami (FL)
62	Johnson, Ron	DE	6-5	255	10-23-1979	1	Shippensburg
94	Kalu, N.D.	DE	6-3	265	8-3-1975	7	Rice
93	Kearse, Jevon	DE	6-4	255	9-3-1976	5	Florida
95	McDougle, Jerome	DE	6-2	264	12-15-1978	1	Miami (FL)
91	Rayburn, Sam	DT	6-3	303	10-20-1980	1	Tulsa
90	Simon, Corey	DT	6-2	293	3-2-1977	4	Florida State
78	Thomas, Hollis	DT	6-1	306	1-10-1974	7	Northern Illinois
97	Walker, Darwin	DT	6-3	294	6-15-1977	4	Tennessee

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
24	Brown, Sheldon	CB	5-10	196	3-19-1979	2	South Carolina
20	Dawkins, Brian	S	5-11	205	10-13-1973	8	Clemson
33	Hart, Clinton	S	6-1	205	7-20-1977	1	Central Florida C.C.
29	Hood, Roderick	CB	5-11	196	10-3-1981	1	Auburn
27	LeJeune, Norman	S	6-1	200	5-10-1980	0	LSU
32	Lewis, Michael	S	6-1	211	4-29-1980	2	Colorado
46	Mikell, Quintin	S	5-10	206	9-16-1980	1	Boise State
26	Sheppard, Lito	CB	5-10	194	4-8-1981	2	Florida

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
57	Adams, Keith	LB	5-11	223	11-22-1979	3	Clemson
56	Burgess, Derrick	LB	6-2	266	8-12-1978	2	Mississippi
59	Ena, Justin	LB	6-3	247	11-20-1977	2	Brigham Young
51	Harrison, Tyreo	LB	6-2	238	5-15-1980	2	Notre Dame
55	Jones, Dhani	LB	6-1	240	2-22-1978	3	Michigan
58	Reese, Ike	LB	6-2	222	10-16-1973	6	Michigan State
53	Simoneau, Mark	LB	6-1	234	1-16-1977	4	Kansas State
54	Wayne, Nate	LB	6-1	237	1-12-1975	6	Mississippi

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
2	Akers, David	K	5-10	200	12-9-1974	6	Louisville
6	Duncan, Tim	K	6-2	210	6-12-1979	1	Oklahoma
8	Johnson, Dirk	P	6-1	205	6-1-1975	2	Northern Colorado

WESLEY HITT

TOMASSO DEROSA

PROJECTED STARTERS

	OFFENSE
QB	Donovan McNabb
FB	Jon Ritchie
RB	Correll Buckhalter
LT	Tra Thomas
LG	Artis Hicks
C	Hank Fraley
RG	Jermane Mayberry
RT	Jon Runyan
TE	Chad Lewis
WR	Todd Pinkston
WR	Terrell Owens

	DEFENSE
LE	Jevon Kearse
LT	Corey Simon
RT	Darwin Walker
RE	Jerome McDougle
LLB	Dhani Jones
MLB	Mark Simoneau
RLB	Nate Wayne
LCB	Sheldon Brown
RCB	Lito Sheppard
SS	Michael Lewis
FS	Brian Dawkins

	SPECIAL TEAMS
P	Dirk Johnson
K	David Akers
PR	Brian Westbrook
KR	Brian Westbrook

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

WEEK 1	vs. New York Giants
Sept. 12	4:15
W/L	Score:

WEEK 2	vs. Minnesota
Sept. 20	9:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 3	@ Detroit
Sept. 26	1:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 4	@ Chicago
Oct. 3	1:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 5 OPEN DATE

WEEK 6	vs. Carolina
Oct. 17	1:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 7	@ Cleveland
Oct. 24	1:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 8	vs. Baltimore
Oct. 31	1:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 9	@ Pittsburgh
Nov. 7	1:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 10	@ Dallas
Nov. 15	9:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 11	vs. Washington
Nov. 21	4:15
W/L	Score:

WEEK 12	@ New York Giants
Nov. 28	1:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 13	vs. Green Bay
Dec. 5	4:15
W/L	Score:

WEEK 14	@ Washington
Dec. 12	8:30
W/L	Score:

WEEK 15	vs. Dallas
Dec. 19	1:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 16	@ St. Louis
Dec. 27	9:00
W/L	Score:

WEEK 17	vs. Cincinnati
Jan. 2	1:00
W/L	Score:

All times Eastern

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	16	Andrews, Shawn	T	6-4	373	12-25-82	Arkansas
3	26	Ware, Matt	S	6-2	209	12-2-82	UCLA
4	33	Reed, J.R.	S	5-10	201	2-11-82	South Florida
4	35	Darilek, Trey	G	6-4	301	4-23-81	UTEP
5	30	Tapeh, Thomas	RB	6-1	245	3-28-80	Minnesota
6	20	Hall, Andy	QB	6-1	218	11-26-80	Delaware
6	27	Wynn, Dexter	CB	5-9	175	2-25-81	Colorado State
7	26	Clarke, Adrien	G	6-4	334	3-26-81	Ohio State
7	41	Perry, Bruce	RB	5-7	196	3-22-81	Maryland
7	42	Furio, Dominic	C	6-3	295	6-4-81	UNLV

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 2 2003 RECORD: 5-11

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Ralph Brown, CB** (NYG)
- **Cornelius Griffin, DT** (PHI)
- **Walter Rasby, TE** (NO)
- **Joe Salave'a, DT** (SD)
- **Shawn Springs, CB** (SEA)
- **Tom Tupa, P** (TB)
- **Marcus Washington, LB** (IND)
- **James Thrash, WR** (trade, PHI)
- **Mark Brunell, QB** (trade, JAX)
- **Mike Barrow, LB** (NYG)
- **Cory Raymer, C** (SD)
- **Walt Harris, CB** (IND)
- **Clinton Portis, RB** (trade, DEN)

STADIUM FACTS

FedEx Field

Capacity: **86,484** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **301-276-6050**
Web site: **www.redskins.com**

Avg. Attendance **80,500**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **93.1**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$68.06**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$20.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$4.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$6.00 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.00 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HIT

FACT: Clinton Portis caught a 72-yard pass and had a 65-yard TD run Oct. 5 vs. Kansas City, thus becoming just the third player since 1970 to have a rush and a reception of more than 60 yards in the same game. The others were Delvin Williams (SF) and Herschel Walker (DAL).

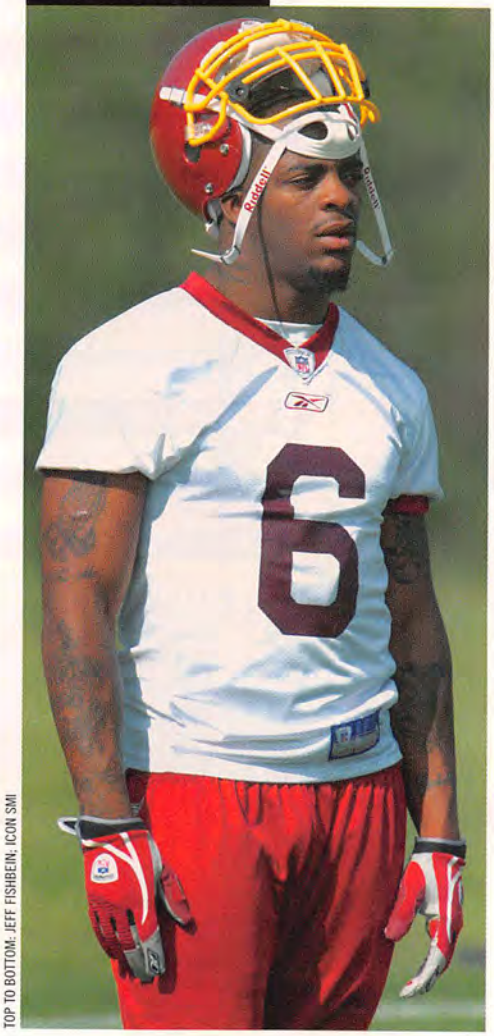
With lots of talent on hand, Gibbs will show that 11 years away isn't really that long

Presence of trade acquisitions Portis and Brunell will ease the transition

Undisputed winners of the offseason once again, this is the year the Redskins plan to enjoy results after the real games begin.

Owner Daniel Snyder's resurrection of coach Joe Gibbs outdid his pursuit of Steve Spurrier. Their trade for running back Clinton Portis trumped last year's deal for Trung Canidate. The addition of quarterback Mark Brunell exceeded the addition of previous veterans such as Danny Wuerffel.

Clinton Portis, RB



TOP TO BOTTOM: JEFF FISHBEIN; ICON SMI

He said it:

"To me, the things that don't change are character and smarts—no matter what sport you're in or what business you're in."
—Redskins coach Joe Gibbs

In a tight NFC East, the Redskins are as prepared as anyone else to knock the Philadelphia Eagles from their perch. In landing Gibbs, they have followed the blueprint of the Dallas Cowboys and Bill Parcells.

Offensive line — Grade: B-

Although the play of left tackle Chris Samuels has been less than expected the last two seasons, and there were rumors of a trade, the combination of Samuels and right tackle Jon Jansen remains formidable. The problem is depth, which is why Gibbs used two of his four total draft choices on tackles Mark Wilson and Jim Molinaro.

Inside, the return of center Cory Raymer provides options because Lennie Friedman can push left guard Derrick Dockery, who also could play tackle. Right guard Randy Thomas is solid and Brandon Winey shows promise backing up at both guard and tackle.

Quarterbacks — Grade: B-

The arrival of Brunell was not met with open arms by young Patrick Ramsey, but Gibbs is confident he can convince everybody that two starting-quarterback prospects are better than one. Despite the steep price paid to pry Brunell from Jacksonville, Gibbs claims he must compete with Ramsey for the No. 1 spot.

"I'm going to start the best guy who gives me the best chance to keep from getting booed," Gibbs says.

Both players are coming off injury; Ramsey foot surgery and Brunell an elbow. After throwing only 82 passes last season, Brunell must prove he's still got what it takes. Tim Hasselbeck is the third quarterback.

Running backs

Grade: A

Gibbs wasn't going to go into a season without a strong running back. Last year, the Redskins thought they could thrive without Stephen Davis, then watched Davis in the Super Bowl with Carolina. His replacement, Canidate, wasn't the answer and neither was Ladell Betts, Chad Morton or Rock Cartwright.

Portis is the answer. Only San Diego's LaDainian Tomlinson is a more complete running and catching threat. Not as big as traditional Gibbs backs, Portis is already the best back in the division.

"I've had great running backs," Gibbs says. "Big backs like John Riggins. Smaller guys like Joe Washington. In-between guys like Earnest Byner. I don't care if he's big or small as long as he's productive. Clinton is definitely that."

Receivers

Grade: A-

Laveranues Coles did not disappoint as last year's top offseason acquisition. Although he had to work with young quarterbacks, Coles lived up to the promises and should be even more effective now that the Redskins have regained the services of James Thrash from Philadelphia to help Rod Gardner as a third receiver. Taylor Jacobs and Darnerien McCants will also push for playing time.

Gibbs added tight end Walter Rasby more as an H-back, blocking type to bolster the running game, and signed veteran Brian Kozlowski as well. Zeron Flemister will contribute more as a receiver. Gibbs passed up Kellen Winslow Jr. in the draft and took Chris Cooley of Utah State in the third round instead, another H-back possibility.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	291.2	23
Rushing	103.3	22
Passing	187.9	21
Scoring	287	22
Punt Returns	9.3	15
Kick Returns	22.5	9
Red Zone TD %	53.3	11T
Total Defense	338.3	25
Against Rush	138.6	24
Against Pass	199.7	14
Points Allowed	372	24
Interceptions	17	11
Sacks	27	26
Turnover Diff.	+2	10T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
272	95	156	21

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
45	214	24	15

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
8	21	1	0

REDSKINS' BEST-EVER QBs

FINALSHOT/IRP

1. **SAMMY BAUGH**
   Career Passing Yards: **21,886**
   Career TD Passes: **187**
2. **SONNY JURGENSEN**
   Career Passing Yards: **32,224**
   Career TD Passes: **255**
3. **JOE THEISMANN**
   Career Passing Yards: **25,206**
   Career TD Passes: **160**

Defensive line

Grade: C-

Another rebuilding project is under way for new defensive coordinator Gregg Williams, who was successful under Jeff Fisher in Tennessee before faltering as Buffalo's head coach.

The Redskins overpaid underachieving tackle Cornelius Griffin to jump from the Giants. The addition of end Phillip Daniels from the Bears won't solve the pass-rushing problems, although Daniels is a solid player who will compete with Regan Upshaw, Renaldo Wynn and Peppi Zellner.

Williams would love to see tackle Brandon Noble healthy after knee surgery cost him last season, but it's a long shot for him to get into the mix with Griffin and Bernard Holsey inside.

Linebackers

Grade: B+

Holdover veteran Kevin Mitchell will vie with newcomer Mike Barrow to replace departed Jeremiah Trotter at middle linebacker. The addition of Marcus Washington from Indianapolis gives Williams options with star LaVar Arrington. Washington could move to the strongside, where Arrington plays. Arrington needs more continuity and discipline from coaches to reach his considerable potential.

If the Redskins can't get a pass rush from the front four, they will have to try to get it from Arrington and Washington.

Secondary

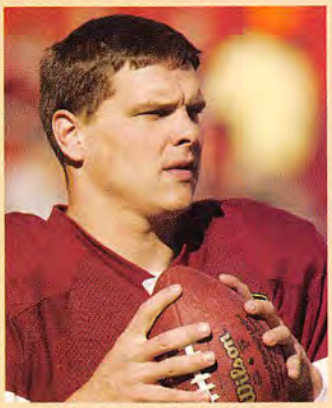
Grade: B+

The trade of cornerback Champ Bailey for Portis robbed the Redskins of their best defensive player, so Fred Smoot and newcomer Shawn Springs must elevate their games to

Arrival of Gibbs, Brunell leaves Patrick Ramsey a forgotten man at quarterback

Looking back to the start of last season, this was not the offseason Patrick Ramsey expected or hoped for. In August an old fracture in his foot started acting up, but still he quarterbacked the Redskins to a 3-1 start and, even as the injury became worse and Washington collapsed, he impressed the league with his toughness and tenacity. But he ended up on injured reserve, his foot in a boot. Then, coach Steve Spurrier was suddenly gone, replaced by Washington legend Joe Gibbs.

Then came the worst blow: The Redskins acquired Mark Brunell, the Jacksonville veteran with a successful past and a rich contract whose arrival was heralded with a press conference. Gibbs, who has always favored veteran quarterbacks, promises an open competition for the starting job and rightly insists that injuries mean NFL teams need two quality quarterbacks these days. Still, while Ramsey was still hobbling around, his agent, Jimmy Sexton, was pushing the Redskins—unsuccessfully—for a trade. So Ramsey was forced to begin learning a new offense, competing for his own job and rehabbing his knee all at the same time.



AL KOOISTRA

Patrick Ramsey

While Gibbs has said little about the subject, Ramsey has said all of the right things. He says his "initial reaction (to Brunell's acquisition) was it didn't bode well, but coach Gibbs has promised an even competition. He's a straightforward man and a man of integrity."

While it may seem to be mere political correctness, the truth is that Ramsey is, on some level, disinterested in all that stuff. When March arrived, he was just relieved to be out of that boot, able to walk without compensating and to rehab and work out three hours a day sans pain. Ramsey says he gets along well with Brunell but fully intends to win the starting job.

"I think coach Gibbs' offense actually suits me well, and being healthy allows me to focus on playing," he says.

In other words, when Ramsey is running a play, he'll be able to think on his feet instead of worrying about them.

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 5, Lost 11

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/04	W	16-13	New York Jets
09/14	W	33-31	at Atlanta
09/21	L	24-21 (OT)	New York Giants
09/28	W	20-17	New England
10/05	L	27-25	at Philadelphia
10/12	L	35-13	Tampa Bay
10/19	L	24-7	at Buffalo
11/02	L	21-14	at Dallas
11/09	W	27-20	Seattle
11/16	L	20-17	at Carolina
11/23	L	24-23	at Miami
11/30	L	24-20	New Orleans
12/07	W	20-7	at New York Giants
12/14	L	27-0	Dallas
12/21	L	27-24	at Chicago
12/27	L	31-7	Philadelphia

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Canidate	142	600	4.2	38	1
Cartwright	107	411	3.8	22	4
Betts	77	255	3.3	13t	2
Morton	48	216	4.5	27	0
Ramsey	15	62	4.1	24	1
Hasselbeck	15	41	2.7	11	0
Coles	10	39	3.9	23	0
McCullough	1	9	9.0	9	0
Simon	3	9	3.0	6	0
R. Johnson	1	6	6.0	6	0
B. Johnson	2	5	2.5	4	0
Redskins	**421**	**1653**	**3.9**	**38**	**8**
Opponents	**504**	**2217**	**4.4**	**52**	**20**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Coles	82	1204	14.7	64	6
Gardner	59	600	10.2	35	5
McCants	27	360	13.3	32t	6
Cartwright	18	176	9.8	40	0
Morton	15	187	12.5	36t	1
P. Johnson	15	170	11.3	31	1
Betts	15	167	11.1	34	0
Canidate	10	71	7.1	25	1
Flemister	9	89	9.9	18	0
B. Johnson	9	71	7.9	19	0
Royal	5	48	9.6	20	0
Chamberlain	4	29	7.3	15	0
Redskins	**283**	**3273**	**11.6**	**64**	**21**
Opponents	**285**	**3354**	**11.8**	**80t**	**23**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Ramsey	337	179	2166	14	9
Hasselbeck	177	95	1012	5	7
R. Johnson	7	5	39	0	0
Gardner	3	2	46	2	0
Hamdan	2	1	7	0	0
Barker	1	1	3	0	0
Redskins	**527**	**283**	**3273**	**21**	**16**
Opponents	**483**	**285**	**3354**	**23**	**17**

SACKS

Armstead 6.5, Arrington 6.0, B. Smith 5.0, Holsey 2.5, Wynn 2.0, Trotter 1.5, Dalton 1.0, Upshaw 1.0, Zellner 1.0, Marshall 0.5

Redskins 27.0, Opponents 43.0

t=touchdown

LaVar Arrington, LB

NEWMAN LOWRANCE

replace him. The Redskins also added starting cornerback Walt Harris from Indianapolis and Giants backup Ralph Brown to holdover Rashad Bauman.

The arrival of top draft choice Sean Taylor at strong safety should help make up for the departure of Bailey. Taylor will team with Matt Bowen and is expected to have the same immediate impact that Roy Williams had in Dallas. Ifeanyi Ohalete will back up.

Special teams — Grade: B

Tom Tupa arrived from Tampa to provide experienced punting. John Hall remains the placekicker and Morton is the return specialist for both punts and kickoffs.

Management — Grade: B

Gibbs instantly legitimizes an impetuous front office. His great reputation is not lost on consummate Redskin fan Snyder, who has demonstrated problems with listening to his employees. Gibbs will have to get used to the new way of doing business in the salary-cap era, but Snyder doesn't let much keep him from what he wants.

"I'll tell you this. If we lose games this year, it won't be because of Dan Snyder," Gibbs says. "It will be because of me, the coaching staff and the players."

Bottom line

Gibbs' ability to mold winning teams without much continuity in personnel put him into the Hall of Fame. He will have to make adjustments after 11 years away from the game, but other teams soon will be making adjustments to him. The first confrontation with Parcells and Dallas is Monday night, Sept. 27, in Washington.

FINAL GRADE **89**

Joe Gibbs, head coach

Jack Burns, QBs; **Joe Bugel**, asst. head coach-offense; **Gregg Williams**, asst. head coach-defense; **Don Breaux**, off. coord.; **Ernie Zampese**, off. consultant; **Rennie Simmons**, TEs; **Stan Hixon**, WRs; **Earnest Byner**, RBs; **Bill Lazor**, off.asst.; **Coy Gibbs**, quality control-offense; **Greg Blache**, def.coord.-def. line; **Dale Lindsey**, linebackers; **DeWayne Walker**, secondary-cornerbacks; **Steve Jackson**, safeties-third downs; **Danny Smith**, special teams; **Kirk Olivadotti**, quality control-def.-special teams asst.

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Brunell, Mark	QB	6-1	217	9-17-1970	10	Washington
12	Hamdan, Gibran	QB	6-6	240	2-8-1981	1	Indiana
8	Hasselbeck, Tim	QB	6-1	211	4-6-1978	2	Boston College
11	Ramsey, Patrick	QB	6-2	217	2-14-1979	2	Tulane

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
71	Albright, Ethan	C	6-5	265	5-1-1971	9	North Carolina
66	Dockery, Derrick	G	6-6	345	9-7-1980	1	Texas
79	Elisara, Pita	T	6-4	305	11-16-1976	0	Indiana
63	Ferrario, Bill	G	6-2	315	9-22-1978	1	Wisconsin
74	Fiore, Dave	G	6-4	293	8-10-1974	6	Hofstra
64	Friedman, Lennie	G	6-3	283	10-13-1976	4	Duke
76	Jansen, Jon	T	6-6	305	1-28-1976	5	Michigan
73	Jones, Kenyatta	T	6-3	310	1-18-1979	2	South Florida
50	Moore, Larry	C	6-2	309	6-1-1975	6	Brigham Young
	Raymer, Cory	C	6-3	300	3-3-1973	8	Wisconsin
60	Samuels, Chris	T	6-5	310	7-28-1977	4	Alabama
57	Terrell, Daryl	G	6-4	317	1-25-1975	5	Southern Mississippi
77	Thomas, Randy	G	6-5	306	1-19-1976	5	Mississippi State
68	Winey, Brandon	T	6-7	315	1-27-1978	1	LSU

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
46	Betts, Ladell	RB	5-10	222	8-27-1979	2	Iowa
30	Canidate, Trung	RB	5-11	205	3-3-1977	4	Arizona
40	Cartwright, Rock	RB	5-7	223	12-3-1979	2	Kansas State
22	McCullough, Sultan	RB	6-1	197	2-12-1980	1	USC
20	Morton, Chad	RB	5-8	203	4-4-1977	4	Southern California
	Portis, Clinton	RB	5-11	205	9-1-1981	2	Miami (FL)
44	Sellers, Mike	RB	6-3	260	7-21-1975	4	Walla Walla C.C.
45	Simon, John	RB	5-11	202	12-11-1978	2	Louisiana Tech

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Coles, Laveranues	WR	5-11	193	12-29-1977	4	Florida State
87	Gardner, Rod	WR	6-2	213	10-26-1977	3	Clemson
86	Jacobs, Taylor	WR	6-1	198	05-30-1981	1	Florida
	Kozlowski, Brian	TE	6-3	250	10-4-1970	10	Connecticut
85	McCants, Darnerien	WR	6-3	214	08-1-1977	2	Delaware State
86	Rasby, Walter	TE	6-3	252	09-7-1972	10	Wake Forest
88	Royal, Robert	TE	6-4	257	05-15-1979	1	LSU
83	Russell, Cliff	WR	5-11	193	02-8-1979	1	Utah
17	Scott, Gari	WR	6-1	191	06-2-1978	1	Michigan State
88	Stephens, Leonard	TE	6-3	249	07-9-1978	1	Howard
	Thrash, James	WR	6-1	200	04-28-1975	7	Missouri Southern State
48	Ware, Kevin	TE	6-3	259	09-30-1980	1	Washington

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
93	Daniels, Phillip	DE	6-5	285	3-4-1973	8	Georgia
	Griffin, Cornelius	DT	6-3	300	12-3-1976	4	Alabama
99	Haley, Jermaine	DT	6-4	325	2-23-1973	4	Butte
95	Killings, Cedric	DT	6-2	301	12-14-1977	2	Carson-Newman
62	McGrew, Reggie	DT	6-1	312	12-16-1976	3	Florida
75	Noble, Brandon	DT	6-2	312	4-10-1974	4	Penn State
95	Salave'a, Joe	DT	6-3	305	3-23-1975	5	Arizona
91	Upshaw, Regan	DE	6-4	265	8-12-1975	8	California
94	Warner, Ron	DE	6-2	270	9-26-1975	3	Kansas
	White, Greg	DE	6-3	268	7-25-1979	0	Minnesota
97	Wynn, Renaldo	DE	6-3	292	9-3-1974	7	Notre Dame

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
25	Bauman, Rashad	CB	5-8	184	5-7-1979	2	Oregon
41	Bowen, Matt	S	6-1	207	11-12-1976	4	Iowa
22	Brown, Ralph	CB	5-10	185	9-16-1978	4	Nebraska
29	Franz, Todd	S	6-1	202	4-12-1976	3	Tulsa
	Harris, Walt	CB	5-11	192	8-10-1974	8	Mississippi State
23	Jimoh, Ade	CB	6-1	190	4-18-1980	1	Utah State
34	Lott, Andre	CB	5-10	196	5-31-1979	2	Tennessee
	Ohalete, Ifeanyi	CB	6-2	222	5-22-1979	3	USC
21	Smoot, Fred	CB	5-11	174	4-17-1979	3	Mississippi State
24	Springs, Shawn	CB	6-1	204	3-11-1975	7	Ohio State

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
56	Arrington, LaVar	LB	6-3	253	6-20-1978	4	Penn State
	Barrow, Mike	LB	6-2	245	4-19-1970	11	Miami (FL)
53	Campbell, Khary	LB	6-1	230	4-4-1979	2	Bowling Green
52	Marshall, Lemar	LB	6-2	227	12-17-1976	2	Michigan State
55	Mitchell, Kevin	LB	6-1	258	1-1-1971	10	Syracuse
58	Pierce, Antonio	LB	6-1	240	10-26-1978	3	Arizona
51	Smith, Clifton	LB	6-3	255	7-21-1980	1	Syracuse
54	Trotter, Jeremiah	LB	6-1	262	1-20-1977	6	Stephen F. Austin
	Washington, Marcus	LB	6-3	247	10-17-1977	4	Auburn

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
10	Hall, John	K	6-3	240	3-17-1974	7	Wisconsin
	Leaverton, David	P	6-3	210	4-1-1978	0	Tennessee
1	Stemke, Kevin	P	6-2	194	11-23-1978	1	Wisconsin
9	Tupa, Tom	P	6-4	225	2-6-1966	15	Ohio State

JOE ROBBINS

PROJECTED STARTERS

	OFFENSE
QB	Mark Brunell
FB	Rock Cartwright
RB	Clinton Portis
LT	Chris Samuels
LG	Derrick Dockery
C	Cory Raymer
RG	Randy Thomas
RT	Jon Jansen
TE	Walter Rasby
WR	Rod Gardner
WR	Laveranues Coles

	DEFENSE
LE	Phillip Daniels
LT	Bernard Holsey
RT	Cornelius Griffin
RE	Regan Upshaw
LLB	LaVar Arrington
MLB	Kevin Mitchell
RLB	Marcus Washington
LCB	Shawn Springs
RCB	Fred Smoot
SS	Sean Taylor
FS	Matt Bowen

	SPECIAL TEAMS
P	Tom Tupa
K	John Hall
PR	Chad Morton
KR	Chad Morton

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

WEEK 1 vs. Tampa Bay — Sept. 12 — 1:00 — Score:

WEEK 2 @ New York Giants — Sept. 19 — 1:00 — Score:

WEEK 3 vs. Dallas — Sept. 27 — 9:00 — Score:

WEEK 4 @ Cleveland — Oct. 3 — 1:00 — Score:

WEEK 5 vs. Baltimore — Oct. 10 — 8:30 — Score:

WEEK 6 @ Chicago — Oct. 17 — 1:00 — Score:

WEEK 7 OPEN DATE

WEEK 8 vs. Green Bay — Oct. 31 — 1:00 — Score:

WEEK 9 @ Detroit — Nov. 7 — 1:00 — Score:

WEEK 10 vs. Cincinnati — Nov. 14 — 4:05 — Score:

WEEK 11 @ Philadelphia — Nov. 21 — 4:15 — Score:

WEEK 12 @ Pittsburgh — Nov. 28 — 1:00 — Score:

WEEK 13 vs. New York Giants — Dec. 5 — 4:15 — Score:

WEEK 14 vs. Philadelphia — Dec. 12 — 8:30 — Score:

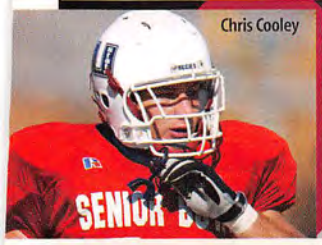
WEEK 15 @ San Francisco — Dec. 18 — 5:00 — Score:

WEEK 16 @ Dallas — Dec. 26 — 4:15 — Score:

WEEK 17 vs. Minnesota — Jan. 2 — 1:00 — Score:

All times Eastern

(L TO R): ROBERT SEALE/SPORTING NEWS/ICON; BOB LEVERONE/TSN/ICON SMI



2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	5	Taylor, Sean	S	6-2	231	4-1-83	Miami (FL)
3	18	Cooley, Chris	TE	6-3	265	7-11-82	Utah State
5	19	Wilson, Mark	T	6-6	314	11-11-80	California
6	15	Molinaro, Jim	T	6-6	309	4-27-81	Notre Dame

DALLAS COWBOYS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 3 2003 RECORD: 10-6

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Marcellus Wiley, DE** (SD)
- **Drew Henson, QB** (trade, HOU)
- **Keyshawn Johnson, WR** (trade, TB)

STADIUM FACTS

Texas Stadium

Capacity: **65,639** Turf: **Artificial**
Tickets: **972-785-4800**
Web site: **www.dallascowboys.com**

Avg. Attendance **63,903**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **97.5**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$53.06**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$12.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.00 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.50 / 32oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: The Cowboys have never retired a player's jersey number, but the franchise does have 12 members in its Ring of Honor, including 2003 inductee Tex Schramm.

STAT: Last season, Dallas led the NFC in rush defense (89.1 yards allowed per game), pass defense (164.4) and total defense (253.5).

LOOK IT UP: On Oct. 12, 1989, the Cowboys were involved in the largest trade in NFL history, made up of 18 players or draft picks, including running back Herschel Walker.

THE COUNT:

27 – Cowboys' postseason appearances, most of any franchise.

4 – Different teams Bill Parcells has led to the playoffs, an NFL record.

7 – Field goals for Billy Cundiff in Week Two, tying an NFL single-game record.

Talent hasn't quite caught up to expectation level in Big D

Training-camp battles at quarterback, running back will prove critical

Overachievers in 2003, the Cowboys are poised to become underachievers in 2004. Bill Parcells raised expectations too high too fast for his average team to keep pace. Of course, Parcells would love everybody to believe he can't take the next step right away.

Despite an astonishing record of 10-6 and a surprising playoff berth, the Cowboys still have question marks in positions as vital as quarterback and as basic as running back. But there is no doubt Parcells and Jerry Jones have a plan. Passing up their choice of all the running backs in the draft, they traded down until they found one they liked, Notre Dame's Julius Jones. That's conviction.

Adding Parcells favorite Keyshawn Johnson at wide receiver is a start toward boosting one of the lowest-scoring teams in the NFC, although Johnson hasn't been a scoring threat since he and Parcells parted ways in New York.

Offensive line

Grade: C

Hoping for the return of center Al Johnson from microfracture surgery on a knee that robbed him of a promising rookie season, the Cowboys remain unsettled on the line. Former Pro Bowl left guard Larry Allen remained in an offseason doghouse and right tackle Ryan Young was released after losing his job to Kurt Vollers.

Left tackle Flozell Adams is the anchor and, if Johnson can't come back, Matt Lehr stays as the fill-in at center along with Gennaro DiNapoli. Andre Gurode and Vollers

He said it:

"They had a chance to pick whoever they wanted and they passed it up and got me. I just feel lucky and blessed. I'm glad to be here and hopefully I can make them happy they picked me."
—Cowboys rookie RB Julius Jones

Quincy Carter, QB

TOP TO BOTTOM: ROBERT SEALE/SPORTING NEWS/ICON SMI; ROB TRINGALI/SPORTSCHROME

are penciled in on the right side, with DeMingo Graham expected to push Gurode. Parcells used second- and third-round picks for Jacob Rogers and Stephen Peterman, respectively, suggesting a rebuilding job is in order.

Quarterbacks

Grade: C+

Despite the near-breakthrough of Quincy Carter, the decision to sign ex-baseball player Drew Henson to replace another ex-baseball player, Chad Hutchinson, gives pause. Carter, a former minor-league baseball player himself, must think he's being thrown at.

The Cowboys want to expand their offense to break from the middle of the pack and Parcells will not tolerate a quarterback who throws more interceptions than touchdown passes. Second-year backup Tony Romo will get a shot at playing time someday, too. He just hopes Henson doesn't get in line ahead of him.

Running backs

Grade: C-

After much gnashing of teeth to push Emmitt Smith out of town, replacement Troy Hambrick looked no better than a backup, with a pedestrian 3.5-yard average, worst among all NFC starters. Jones will replace him after the Cowboys decided first-round backs Steven Jackson, Kevin Jones and Chris Perry weren't worth it. That will put considerable pressure on Jones, who saw his brother, former Cardinals first-round pick Thomas Jones, struggle.

Richie Anderson is an excellent third-down back and blocker, and the Cowboys hope fullback Jamar Martin can find a niche.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	322.6	15
Rushing	124.9	12
Passing	197.6	17
Scoring	289	21
Punt Returns	7.6	25
Kick Returns	21.5	13
Red Zone TD %	42.6	28
Total Defense	253.5	1
Against Rush	89.1	3
Against Pass	164.4	1
Points Allowed	260	2
Interceptions	13	25T
Sacks	32	21
Turnover Diff.	-4	22T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
286	115	149	22

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
47	191	20	17

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
11	17	3	2

COWBOYS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **ROGER STAUBACH**
   Career Passing Yards: **22,700**
   Career TD Passes: **153**
2. **TROY AIKMAN**
   Career Passing Yards: **32,942**
   Career TD Passes: **165**
3. **DANNY WHITE**
   Career Passing Yards: **21,959**
   Career TD Passes: **155**

FINALSHOT/JRP

Receivers

Grade: B-

The swap of Johnson for Joey Galloway decreases speed and increases size. A far better target and fearless over the middle, Johnson should help Carter or any quarterback, especially if Parcells continues to rely on him like he once did.

Terry Glenn and Antonio Bryant will vie for the other starting spot and both will play key roles as they did last year, although more improvement is expected of Bryant in his third season. Big, fast Randal Williams should push for playing time along with second-year man Zuriel Smith.

Dan Campbell and Jason Witten are two better-than-average tight ends, with the second-year receiving specialist Witten expected to benefit from Johnson's presence. Draft choice Sean Ryan was picked for his blocking.

Defensive line

Grade: B-

Parcells hopes newcomer Marcellus Wiley can provide the consistent pass rush that departed Ebenezer Ekuban couldn't. If not, left end Greg Ellis may move to the right side at times. Wiley managed only three sacks for San Diego's poor defense, which is only one-half of a sack more than Ekuban got. But Wiley has enjoyed double-digit sack years and Ekuban never has.

Tackles La'Roi Glover and Willie Blade were solid in the middle of the Cowboys' top-ranked defense. Daleroy Stewart, Eric Ogbogu, Kenyon Coleman and Jermaine Brooks are backups.

Cowboys wary of Parcells' watchful eye in the offseason

He knows when you're awake, he knows when you've been bad or good ...

No, not Santa Claus. We're talking about Bill Parcells, who is far less jolly—and his players know it.

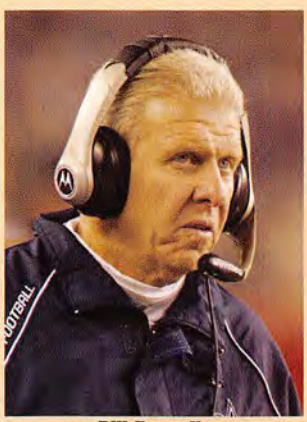
Last year, Parcells took over a team that had finished 5-11 three years running and surprised everyone by pushing and prodding them in the offseason, transforming them into a playoff team. This year, his players know what to expect and they know expectations are even higher. They know that life under Parcells means never slacking off.

"During the offseason workouts, he's in there every day," says tight end Dan Campbell, who had signed as a free agent with Dallas after 2002. "He wants to see what everyone is doing. He's standing right there watching you."

This isn't about who can bench-press the most weight, however. For Parcells, it's all about the mental approach.

"He's looking at little things," Campbell says, "like how you respond to the guy lifting with you or how you approach your last rep—do you give it all or are you the guy who lets up on it? That's how he makes assessments on people."

AL KOOISTRA



Bill Parcells

Parcells, who will pull different players aside each day to ask about their new house or tell them they need to lose weight, is easier to talk to during the offseason, Campbell says. And, he adds, the players know this year to take Parcells at his word.

"Last year he said to let up a month before training camp, saying 'I'm gonna break you guys then,'" Campbell recalls.

But even given fair warning, Campbell says, the Dallas players didn't really appreciate how serious he was and were wiped out because they hadn't given themselves time to prepare. "He shocked a lot of people. This year we know what to expect."

And while Parcells is "a hard-ass, no doubt about that," Campbell says the team loves playing for him and understands that the hard work last offseason was crucial to their success in 2003.

"We won't slip up in that department," Campbell says. "The workouts are more fun now having seen what they did for us."

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 10, Lost 6

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	27-13	Atlanta
09/15	W	35-32 (OT)	at New York Giants
09/28	W	17-6	at New York Jets
10/05	W	24-7	Arizona
10/12	W	23-21	Philadelphia
10/19	W	38-7	at Detroit
10/26	L	16-0	at Tampa Bay
11/02	W	21-14	Washington
11/09	W	10-6	Buffalo
11/16	L	12-0	at New England
11/23	W	24-20	Carolina
11/27	L	40-21	Miami
12/07	L	36-10	at Philadelphia
12/14	W	27-0	at Washington
12/21	W	19-3	New York Giants
12/28	L	13-7	at New Orleans

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Hambrick	275	972	3.5	42	5
Anderson	70	306	4.4	19	1
Carter	68	257	3.8	19	2
Cason	40	220	5.5	63t	2
Murrell	28	107	3.8	17	0
Bickerstaff	19	56	2.9	9	1
Glenn	3	55	18.3	47	0
Galloway	4	22	5.5	10	0
Ja. Martin	4	7	1.8	3	0
Bryant	2	0	0.0	2	0
Hutchinson	2	-3	-1.5	-1	0
Cowboys	**515**	**1999**	**3.9**	**63t**	**11**
Opponents	**413**	**1425**	**3.5**	**64t**	**7**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Anderson	69	493	7.1	37	4
Glenn	52	754	14.5	51t	5
Bryant	39	550	14.1	54	2
Witten	35	347	9.9	36t	1
Galloway	34	672	19.8	64	2
Campbell	20	195	9.8	23	1
Cason	17	142	8.4	28	0
Hambrick	17	99	5.8	13	0
Murrell	4	32	8.0	14	0
Smith	3	46	15.3	32	0
Ja. Martin	2	9	4.5	6	0
Robinson	2	8	4.0	5t	2
Cowboys	**294**	**3347**	**11.4**	**64**	**17**
Opponents	**239**	**2820**	**11.8**	**76t**	**18**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Carter	505	292	3302	17	21
Hutchinson	2	1	8	0	0
Anderson	1	0	0	0	0
Cason	1	1	37	0	0
Cowboys	**510**	**294**	**3347**	**17**	**21**
Opponents	**492**	**239**	**2820**	**18**	**13**

SACKS

Ellis 8.0, Glover 5.0, Ogbogu 3.5, Ekuban 2.5, Nguyen 2.0, Ro. Williams 2.0, Carson LG 1.5, Carson TM 1.5, Stewart 1.5, Blade 1.0, Coakley 1.0, Coleman 1.0, Newman 1.0, Singleton 1.0, Woodson 1.0

Cowboys 32.0, Opponents 37.0

t=touchdown

ROB TRINGALI/SPORTSCHROME

Dat Nguyen, LB

Linebackers — Grade: A-

Dexter Coakley, Dat Nguyen and Al Singleton form an outstanding trio of undersized but active tacklers who are underappreciated in defensive coordinator Mike Zimmer's scheme. Linebackers are supposed to make tackles and this trio does. They made believers of Parcells, who prefers bigger 'backers. Markus Steele and Bradie James are the top backups.

Secondary — Grade: A-

The heart of the defense, cornerback Terence Newman and safeties Darren Woodson and Roy Williams provide a nice combination of speed, coverage and hitting. Pete Hunter will replace departed right cornerback Mario Edwards. The return of Donald Mitchell from injury is vital because there isn't a lot of depth or experience, which is why Parcells used three draft picks for defensive backs to join other backups Jemeel Powell, Andrew Davison, Lynn Scott and Tony Dixon.

Special teams — Grade: C

Punter Toby Gowin is gone for the second time, so a help-wanted sign is out, with Mat McBriar a candidate from the practice squad. Billy Cundiff returns as the placekicker. Zuriel Smith must replace Galloway as the punt-return man and Michael Bates is back again to return kickoffs.

Management — Grade: B+

The second season has been Parcells' breakthrough year at other stops in New York and New England. In this case, it could be his *breakdown* season. The Cowboys are likely to improve on the field without improving the won-loss record in a tough division. Parcells will have to convince everybody that's progress.

So far, Parcells and Jerry Jones have been coexisting nicely. Their draft strategy was obviously well thought out. It will be interesting to see what happens if a quarterback controversy buds between Carter and Henson.

Bottom line

Parcells' coaching unquestionably makes a difference. This year, he greets old nemesis Joe Gibbs in Washington and another proven winner in former assistant Tom Coughlin of the Giants. It is the division of coaches, but talent usually has something to say about the final standings, too.

The Cowboys still don't appear ready to leap into the elite, if there is such a thing anymore in the NFL. They beat Carolina at home in the regular season but couldn't compete in the playoffs.

FINAL GRADE **85**

COWBOYS ROSTER

Bill Parcells, head coach

Maurice Carthon, offensive coord.-running backs; **Bruce DeHaven,** special teams; **Gary Gibbs,** linebackers; **Steve Hoffman,** kickers-defensive quality control; **Jim Jeffcoat,** defensive ends; **David Lee,** offensive asst.; **Mike MacIntyre,** asst. secondary; **Todd Haley,** wide receivers; **Sean Payton,** asst. head coach-quarterbacks; **Kacy Rodgers,** defensive tackles; **Tony Sparano,** tight ends; **George Warhop,** offensive line; **Mike Zimmer,** defensive coord.

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Carter, Quincy	QB	6-2	213	10-13-1977	3	Georgia
11	Henson, Drew	QB	6-4	223	2-13-1980	0	Michigan
7	Hutchinson, Chad	QB	6-5	237	2-21-1977	2	Stanford
9	Romo, Tony	QB	6-2	227	4-21-1980	0	Eastern Illinois
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
76	Adams, Flozell	T	6-7	357	5-18-1975	6	Michigan State
73	Allen, Larry	G	6-3	335	11-27-1971	10	Sonoma State
70	Collins, Javiar	T	6-6	322	4-13-1978	2	Northwestern
63	DiNapoli, Gennaro	C	6-3	287	5-25-1975	4	Virginia Tech
61	Graham, DeMingo	G	6-3	310	9-10-1973	4	Hofstra
65	Gurode, Andre	G	6-4	326	3-6-1978	2	Colorado
62	Johnson, Al	C	6-5	303	1-27-1979	0	Wisconsin
68	Lehr, Matt	C	6-2	304	4-25-1979	3	Virginia Tech
77	Tucker, Torrin	G	6-6	329	12-25-1979	1	Southern Mississippi
78	Vollers, Kurt	T	6-7	317	4-4-1979	2	Notre Dame
71	Walter, Tyson	T	6-4	310	3-17-1978	2	Ohio State
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
20	Anderson, Richie	RB	6-2	230	9-13-1971	11	Penn State
30	Barnes, Darian	RB	6-2	250	2-28-1980	2	Hampton
46	Bickerstaff, Erik	RB	6-1	230	7-25-1980	1	Wisconsin
23	Cason, Aveion	RB	5-10	204	7-12-1979	3	Illinois State
42	Hambrick, Troy	RB	6-1	233	11-6-1976	4	Savannah State
34	Martin, Jamar	RB	5-11	256	4-12-1980	1	Ohio State
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
29	Bates, Michael	WR-KR	5-10	215	12-19-1969	12	Arizona
88	Bryant, Antonio	WR	6-1	192	3-9-1981	2	Pittsburgh
86	Campbell, Dan	TE	6-5	263	4-13-1976	5	Texas A&M
83	Glenn, Terry	WR	5-11	195	7-23-1974	8	Ohio State
80	James, Cedric	WR	6-1	199	3-19-1979	1	Texas Christian
19	Johnson, Keyshawn	WR	6-4	212	7-22-1972	8	Southern California
85	Robinson, Jeff	TE	6-4	264	2-20-1970	10	Idaho
87	Smith, Zuriel	WR	5-11	166	1-15-1980	1	Hampton
81	Whalen, James	TE	6-2	244	12-11-1977	3	Kentucky
89	Williams, Randal	WR	6-3	220	5-21-1978	3	New Hampshire
82	Witten, Jason	TE	6-5	257	5-6-1982	1	Tennessee
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
99	Blade, Willie	DT	6-3	315	2-7-1979	1	Mississippi State
92	Brooks, Jermaine	DT	6-3	285	4-11-1979	1	Arkansas
91	Carson, Leonardo	DT	6-2	305	2-11-1977	4	Auburn
93	Coleman, Kenyon	DE	6-5	285	4-10-1979	2	UCLA
98	Ellis, Greg	DE	6-6	277	8-14-1975	6	North Carolina
97	Glover, La'Roi	DT	6-2	285	7-4-1974	8	San Diego State
90	Ogbogu, Eric	DE	6-4	270	7-18-1975	5	Maryland
66	Smith, Shaun	DT	6-2	320	8-19-1981	1	South Carolina
64	Stewart, Daleroy	DT	6-4	327	11-2-1978	1	Southern Mississippi
75	Wiley, Marcellus	DE	6-4	275	11-30-1974	7	Columbia
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
25	Davis, Keith	S	5-10	193	12-30-1978	1	Sam Houston State
26	Davison, Andrew	CB	5-11	185	12-9-1979	2	Kansas
24	Dixon, Tony	S	6-1	213	6-18-1979	3	Alabama
47	Hunter, Pete	CB	6-2	212	5-25-1980	2	Virginia Union
30	Mitchell, Donald	CB	5-10	182	12-14-1976	3	Southern Methodist
41	Newman, Terence	CB	5-11	188	9-4-1978	1	Kansas State
25	Powell, Jemeel	CB	6-1	186	8-29-1980	1	California
38	Scott, Lynn	S	6-1	221	6-23-1977	3	N.W. Oklahoma State
31	Williams, Roy	S	6-1	235	8-14-1980	2	Oklahoma
28	Woodson, Darren	S	6-1	219	4-25-1969	12	Arizona State
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Brooks, Jamal	LB	6-2	245	11-9-1976	1	Hampton
52	Coakley, Dexter	LB	5-10	236	10-20-1972	7	Appalachian State
56	James, Bradie	LB	6-2	243	1-17-1981	1	LSU
59	Nguyen, Dat	LB	5-11	243	9-25-1975	5	Texas A&M
54	O'Neil, Keith	LB	6-1	230	8-26-1980	1	Northern Arizona
58	Shanle, Scott	LB	6-2	245	11-23-1979	1	Nebraska
51	Singleton, Al	LB	6-2	228	8-7-1975	7	Temple
55	Steele, Markus	LB	6-3	240	7-24-1979	3	Southern California
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Cundiff, Billy	K	6-1	201	3-30-1980	2	Drake
1	McBriar, Mat	P	6-1	202	7-8-1979	R	Hawaii

MICHAEL CONROY/ AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

NEWMAN LOWRANCE

PROJECTED STARTERS

	OFFENSE
QB	Quincy Carter
FB	Richie Anderson
RB	Julius Jones
LT	Flozell Adams
LG	Larry Allen
C	Matt Lehr
RG	Andre Gurode
RT	Kurt Vollers
TE	Dan Campbell
WR	Terry Glenn
WR	Keyshawn Johnson

	DEFENSE
LE	Greg Ellis
LT	Willie Blade
RT	La'Roi Glover
RE	Marcellus Wiley
LLB	Al Singleton
MLB	Dat Nguyen
RLB	Dexter Coakley
LCB	Terence Newman
RCB	Pete Hunter
SS	Darren Woodson
FS	Roy Williams

	SPECIAL TEAMS
P	Mat McBriar
K	Billy Cundiff
PR	Zuriel Smith
KR	Michael Bates

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
2	11	Jones, Julius	RB	5-9	217	8-14-81	Notre Dame
2	20	Rogers, Jacob	T	6-5	305	8-17-81	USC
3	20	Peterman, Stephen	G	6-3	312	1-11-82	LSU
4	25	Thornton, Bruce	CB	5-10	192	1-31-80	Georgia
5	12	Ryan, Sean	TE	6-4	264	3-27-80	Boston College
7	4	Jones, Nathan	CB	5-10	180	6-15-82	Rutgers
7	15	Crayton, Patrick	WR	6-1	205	4-7-79	N.W. Oklahoma St.
7	22	Reeves, Jacques	CB	5-11	188	10-8-82	Purdue

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ Minnesota	
Sept. 12	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 2 vs. Cleveland	
Sept. 19	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 3 @ Washington	
Sept. 27	9:00
Score:	
WEEK 4 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 5 vs. New York Giants	
Oct. 10	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 6 vs. Pittsburgh	
Oct. 17	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 7 @ Green Bay	
Oct. 24	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 8 vs. Detroit	
Oct. 31	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 9 @ Cincinnati	
Nov. 7	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 10 vs. Philadelphia	
Nov. 15	9:00
Score:	
WEEK 11 @ Baltimore	
Nov. 21	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 12 vs. Chicago	
Nov. 25	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 13 @ Seattle	
Dec. 6	9:00
Score:	
WEEK 14 vs. New Orleans	
Dec. 12	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 15 @ Philadelphia	
Dec. 19	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 16 vs. Washington	
Dec. 26	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 17 @ New York Giants	
Jan. 2	8:30
Score:	

All times Eastern

AFC EAST | AFC NORTH | AFC SOUTH | AFC WEST | NFC EAST | NFC NORTH | NFC SOUTH | NFC WEST

NEW YORK GIANTS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 4 2003 RECORD: 4-12

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Martin Chase, DT** (WAS)
- **Carlos Emmons, LB** (PHI)
- **Barrett Green, LB** (DET)
- **Shaun O'Hara, OG** (CLE)
- **Fred Robbins, DT** (MIN)
- **Barry Stokes, OT** (CLE)
- **Norman Hand, DT** (SEA)
- **Ed Ellis, OT** (SD)
- **Lorenzo Bromell, DE** (OAK)
- **Terry Cousin, CB** (CAR)
- **Jack Brewer, S** (MIN)

STADIUM FACTS

Giants Stadium

Capacity: **80,242** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **201-935-8222**
Web site: **www.giants.com**

Avg. Attendance **78,620**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **98.0**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$61.67**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$15.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.75**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$6.25 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.50 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Six different former Giants assistant coaches have gone on to lead teams to the Super Bowl as head coaches: Vince Lombardi, Tom Landry, Bill Parcells, Bill Belichick, Jim Fassel and John Fox.

STAT: The Giants' offense has finished last in red-zone touchdown percentage in each of the last two seasons, reaching the end zone on only 37.7 percent of its drives inside the opponent 20 (40 of 106).

AL KOOISTRA

Tiki Barber, RB

Manning gets wish to play in N.Y., but Coughlin's crew will have growing pains

Turning around poor defense is new coach's biggest goal

Some players wilt in the New York spotlight. Eli Manning wants it. He demanded it. He's in it.

He didn't seem like the type. He appears more laid back, more Californian than New Yorker. Appearances are deceiving. At least coach Tom Coughlin hopes so as the Giants begin a new era.

Coughlin's track record of building a winner from scratch in Jacksonville will serve him well because a new quarterback is only the start. Coughlin takes over a team that finally exhausted its potential and lost its last eight games under Jim Fassel.

Manning does not take over a group that is Super Bowl-ready. At least he has the luxury of growing along with new teammates.

Offensive line — Grade: C

Too often, the Giants relied on former line coach Jim McNally to mold polished units out of low draft choices and free agents. He did a terrific job and now works in Buffalo. Starting left tackle Luke Petitgout and starting left guards Wayne Lucier and Rich Seubert finished last season on injured reserve, a common theme.

Seubert may not be ready for the opener, which means second-round draft pick Chris Snee better be ready. Center Chris Bober signed with Kansas City and Jeff Hatch, who ended the season at right tackle, was let go. Right guard David Diehl was the only lineman to start all 16 games at the same position. Newcomers Barry Stokes and Shaun O'Hara could start at right tackle and center, respectively. Both arrived from Cleveland. Ed Ellis signed from San Diego. This unit is a work-in-progress.

Quarterbacks — Grade: C-

Kerry Collins was coming off his least-productive season since 1999. He had slipped to a 56.8-percent passer and threw more interceptions than touchdowns, so the draft-day trade to land Manning should have come as no surprise.

Manning may discover, however, that Collins had good excuses operating behind the

makeshift line. Usually, rookie quarterbacks thrown into the fray don't win. Peyton Manning took every snap as a rookie for Indianapolis and finished 3-13.

With Collins and veteran backup Jason Garrett released, the Giants signed 280-pound rookie Jared Lorenzen as a free agent, leaving the future of Jesse "The Bachelor" Palmer in doubt as well.

Running backs

Grade: B-

As good as he is, Tiki Barber can't outrun his fumble problems. He lost six of nine fumbles last season, too many for any No. 1 back. Coughlin appears determined to give forgotten Ron Dayne another chance, and has ordered him to lose weight. Dayne never saw the field last season, but somebody has to step up and help Barber.

Barber started 16 games for the first time in his career, but his production dropped to a 4.4-yard average (lowest since he's been a regular) and only three touchdowns, two by rushing. Likewise, his receiving average dipped to a career low of 6.7 yards a catch. Jim Finn is the blocking back.

Receivers

Grade: B+

Amani Toomer, Ike Hilliard and tight end Jeremy Shockey provide Manning with as good a trio of inside, outside, deep and medium-range threats as start in the league—provided everybody is healthy at the same time. Toomer was the only one who finished the 2003 season.

Third wideout Tim Carter also ended up on injured reserve, so Coughlin hopes draft pick Jamaar Taylor can add depth. Coughlin also must make sure he's on the same page with Shockey, a volatile personality who can be a coach's best friend or worst enemy. Visanthe Shiancoe started seven games as a rookie tight end and caught as many touchdown passes (two) as Shockey.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	308.9	20
Rushing	97.4	28
Passing	211.4	11
Scoring	243	30T
Punt Returns	5.1	32
Kick Returns	19.9	29
Red Zone TD %	38.3	32
Total Defense	332.5	22
Against Rush	119.5	18
Against Pass	213.0	25
Points Allowed	387	29
Interceptions	10	30T
Sacks	46	1
Turnover Diff.	-16	31T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
300	90	184	26

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
47	165	18	13

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
6	16	4	4

GIANTS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **PHIL SIMMS**
   Career Passing Yards: **33,462**
   Career TD Passes: **199**
2. **CHARLIE CONNERLY**
   Career Passing Yards: **19,488**
   Career TD Passes: **173**
3. **Y.A. TITTLE**
   Career Passing Yards: **28,339**
   Career TD Passes: **212**

JOHN MCDONOUGH/ICON SMI

Defensive line

Grade: C

The entire defense is in dry dock after finishing 22nd, starting up front. Defensive coordinator Tim Lewis arrives from Pittsburgh knowing he can count on left end Michael Strahan and little else.

Strahan led the league in sacks again, but tackles Keith Hamilton and Cornelius Griffin are gone, Hamilton to retirement and Griffin to Washington. The Giants hope second-year right end William Joseph shows more than he did as a rookie and at least pushes fellow second-year starter Osi Umenyiora or start at tackle.

Lewis could throw some 3-4 looks into the mix with newcomers Fred Robbins or Norman Hand anchoring the nose. Other newcomers include Martin Chase, Mario Monds and Lorenzo Bromell to join holdover Lance Legree. Seventh-round pass rusher Isaac Hilton of Hampton Institute is an intriguing project.

Linebackers

Grade: C+

Starters Dhani Jones, Mike Barrow and Brandon Short are all gone, replaced by Carlos Emmons from Philadelphia and Barrett Green from Detroit, with holdover backup Nick Greisen assuming Barrow's role in the middle.

Green provides speed and help as a blitzer and cover man in place of Jones. Emmons was Philadelphia's defensive MVP until he got hurt. He will be an upgrade over

Accorsi says Giants need Coughlin's discipline

Last year at the NFL Combine, Giants General Manager Ernie Accorsi watched most coaches chatting and laughing while players ran the 40-yard dash. One man didn't socialize, however, diligently noting every detail transpiring. That man, Tom Coughlin, was no longer even a coach, having been fired by the Jacksonville Jaguars. When Accorsi mentioned this, Coughlin responded, "I will have a team again, though."

Indeed, he does. And it's Accorsi's Giants. Accorsi began putting together a list of potential coaches to replace Jim Fassel before the season even ended. After failing to spark interest in LSU coach Nick Saban, Accorsi and Executive Vice President John Mara interviewed Coughlin and three NFL coordinators—Lovie Smith of the Rams and Romeo Crennel and Charlie Weis of the Patriots.

"After the first interviews, I said to John I'd have been satisfied with any of the four," Accorsi says. "But after our second interview with Tom, John and I both had the same reaction: This was our guy. He just clicked with us."

Coughlin has a history with the Giants. He grew up a Giants fan in upstate New York, was the receivers coach during Bill Parcells' second Super Bowl run, and was actually offered the coaching job in 1993 but decided to stay at Boston College. And he is a "proven winner," Accorsi says, having taken the Jaguars twice to the AFC Championship Game. Ultimately, however, it might be Coughlin's discipline, work ethic and passion for the game that make him the man to turn around the disappointing Giants, a team that suffered serious injuries but also lost crucial games they could have won.

After Coughlin's introductory press conference, the local media likened him to General Patton, thanks to his concise, organized plans and lines like "Discipline is as vital to an athlete as the air he breathes."

While Coughlin, who emphasizes fundamentals as a way to eliminate costly turnovers and penalties, says he is more flexible than his reputation allows, he does impose strict rules and discipline. He won't, however, have control over player personnel as he did in Jacksonville, since that's Accorsi's job. Some Giants veterans have worried about this fire-breathing dragon following the laid-back Fassell as their head coach, but Accorsi thinks it was a necessary step.

"I'm not naïve—we need to improve our offensive line and get some veteran players but our core is pretty good," Accorsi says.

Does that mean a new coach can make the difference?

"It doesn't have to be radical, but this is a Spartan game and every team needs this kind of discipline."

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 4, Lost 12

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	23-13	St. Louis
09/15	L	35-32 (OT)	Dallas
09/21	W	24-21 (OT)	at Washington
10/05	L	23-10	Miami
10/12	L	17-6	at New England
10/19	L	14-10	Philadelphia
10/26	W	29-17	at Minnesota
11/02	W	31-28 (OT)	at New York Jets
11/09	L	27-7	Atlanta
11/16	L	28-10	at Philadelphia
11/24	L	19-13	at Tampa Bay
11/30	L	24-7	Buffalo
12/07	L	20-7	Washington
12/14	L	45-7	at New Orleans
12/21	L	19-3	at Dallas
12/28	L	37-24	Carolina

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Barber	278	1216	4.4	27	2
Levens	68	197	2.9	17	3
Collins	17	49	2.9	22	0
Joyce	11	39	3.5	8	0
Palmer	4	23	5.8	26	0
Mitchell	4	20	5.0	18	1
Hilliard	2	19	9.5	13	0
Toomer	1	5	5.0	5	0
Feagles	1	0	0.0	0	0
Tyree	1	-9	-9.0	-9	0
Giants	**387**	**1559**	**4.0**	**27**	**6**
Opponents	**496**	**1908**	**3.8**	**68t**	**12**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Barber	69	461	6.7	36	1
Toomer	63	1057	16.8	77t	5
Hilliard	60	608	10.1	38	6
Shockey	48	535	11.1	46	2
Carter	26	309	11.9	30	0
Rivers	17	155	9.1	27	0
Tyree	16	211	13.2	48	0
Finn	14	115	8.2	27	0
Shiancoe	10	56	5.6	10	2
Ponder	7	35	5.0	16	0
Levens	5	39	7.8	11	0
Mitchell	4	38	9.5	11	0
Joyce	3	7	2.3	5	0
Dinkins	2	16	8.0	10	0
Giants	**344**	**3642**	**10.6**	**77t**	**16**
Opponents	**309**	**3710**	**12.0**	**64**	**25**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Collins	500	284	3110	13	16
Palmer	116	60	532	3	4
Giants	**616**	**344**	**3642**	**16**	**20**
Opponents	**519**	**309**	**3710**	**25**	**10**

SACKS

Strahan 18.5, Holmes 5.5, Jones 3.0, Short 3.0, Barrow 2.0, Legree 2.0, Hamilton 1.5, Williams 1.5, Brown 1.0, Clark 1.0, Griffin 1.0, Joseph 1.0, Stoutmire 1.0, Umenyiora 1.0, Washington 1.0

Giants 45.0, Opponents 44.0

t=touchdown

TOP TO BOTTOM: TOMASSO DEROSA; DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

Jeremy Shockey, TE

Short on the strongside. Fourth-rounder Reggie Torbor from Auburn could contribute.

Secondary

Grade: B-

Young cornerbacks Will Allen and William Peterson both ended up 2003 on injured reserve. Terry Cousin was added from NFC champion Carolina to replace departed Ralph Brown, but the Giants remain dangerously thin in a division in which they must cover new big receivers Terrell Owens in Philadelphia and Keyshawn Johnson in Dallas.

Safety Shaun Williams also finished on injured reserve. Omar Stoutmire returns as a starter and Jack Brewer comes over from Minnesota to compete with Johnnie Harris and fifth-rounder Gibril Wilson as backups.

Special teams

Grade: C

The Giants thought they had corrected all their special-teams woes a year ago, only to fall victim to more bad luck with injuries, starting with long snapper Ryan Kuehl. They let kicker Mike Hollis go, leaving Matt Bryant as the man. Jeff Feagles remains the punter.

Return specialist Delvin Joyce must replace departed Brian Mitchell, a disappointment in his only season.

He said it:

"Oh, they are not in love with any of us. They don't feel like they owe any of us anything, and I think as players, you can't feel like you owe anybody anything."

—Michael Strahan, on management

Management

Grade: B+

Coughlin could flourish in a structure that allows him to concentrate on coaching and not worry about general managing. That job belongs to Ernie Accorsi until he retires. Coughlin was known as a control freak in Jacksonville, but he was effective.

Bottom line

In a division of evenly matched teams and powerhouse coaches, the Giants will consider themselves fortunate to escape the cellar. Until Manning gets his feet on the ground, expectations in New York shouldn't be pie in the sky.

FINAL GRADE 83

GIANTS ROSTER

Tom Coughlin, head coach

John Hufnagel, off. coord.; **Dave DeGuglielmo**, asst. off. line/quality control; **Pat Flaherty**, off. line; **Kevin Gilbride**, quarterbacks; **Jerald Ingram**, running backs; **Mike Pope**, tight ends; **Mike Sullivan**, wide receivers; **Tim Lewis**, def. coord.; **Billy Davis**, linebackers; **David Merritt**, def. asst./quality control; **Ron Milus**, secondary; **Mike Waufle**, def. line; **Mike Sweatman**, special teams coord.; **Mike Priefer**, asst. special teams

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Palmer, Jesse	QB	6-2	225	10-5-1978	2	Florida
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
74	Allen, Ian	T	6-4	310	7-22-1978	2	Purdue
57	Dach, Carson	C	6-1	253	9-29-1980	1	Eastern Michigan
66	Diehl, David	G	6-5	315	9-15-1980	1	Illinois
69	Ellis, Ed	T	6-5	325	10-13-1975	7	Buffalo
62	Lucier, Wayne	C	6-3	300	12-5-1979	1	Colorado
60	O'Hara, Shaun	G	6-3	306	6-23-1977	4	Rutgers
63	Peters, Scott	C	6-3	300	11-23-1978	1	Arizona State
77	Petitgout, Luke	T	6-6	310	6-16-1976	5	Notre Dame
73	Roehl, Jeff	T	6-4	300	5-18-1980	1	Northwestern
65	Saffer, Michael	T	6-5	302	4-25-1979	0	UCLA
64	Scott, Travis	G	6-6	300	8-9-1979	0	Arizona State
69	Seubert, Rich	G	6-5	305	3-30-1979	3	Western Illinois
68	Smith, Omar	C	6-2	295	9-8-1977	2	Kentucky
79	Stokes, Barry	T	6-4	310	12-20-1973	5	Eastern Michigan
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Barber, Tiki	RB	5-10	200	4-7-1975	7	Virginia
27	Dayne, Ron	RB	5-10	245	3-14-1978	3	Wisconsin
20	Finn, Jim	RB	6-1	245	12-2-1976	4	Pennsylvania
33	Joyce, Delvin	RB	5-7	195	9-21-1978	2	James Madison
	Womack, Antwoine	RB	5-11	214	3-20-1978	0	Virginia
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
84	Carter, Tim	WR	6-1	200	9-21-1979	2	Auburn
13	Cash, Ataveus	WR	6-1	205	5-2-1979	0	Hampton
89	Dinkins, Darnell	TE	6-3	255	1-20-1977	2	Pittsburgh
88	Hilliard, Ike	WR	5-11	210	4-5-1976	7	Florida
87	Ponder, Willie	WR	6-1	205	2-14-1980	1	Southeast Missouri State
83	Rivers, Marcellus	TE	6-4	250	10-26-1978	3	Oklahoma State
82	Shiancoe, Visanthe	TE	6-4	250	6-18-1980	1	Morgan State
80	Shockey, Jeremy	TE	6-5	253	8-18-1980	2	Miami (FL)
81	Toomer, Amani	WR	6-3	208	9-8-1974	8	Michigan
85	Tyree, David	WR	6-1	205	1-3-1980	1	Syracuse
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
95	Bromell, Lorenzo	DE	6-6	260	9-23-1975	6	Clemson
92	Chase, Martin	DT	6-2	310	12-19-1974	5	Oklahoma
95	Ferrara, Frank	DE	6-3	280	12-7-1975	3	Rhode Island
96	Hand, Norman	DT	6-3	310	9-4-1972	8	Mississippi
90	Holmes, Kenny	DE	6-4	265	10-24-1973	7	Miami (FL)
94	Joseph, William	DT	6-5	315	9-3-1979	1	Miami (FL)
91	Kuehl, Ryan	DT	6-5	280	1-18-1972	6	Virginia
70	Legree, Lance	DT	6-1	300	12-22-1977	3	Notre Dame
93	Monds, Mario	DT	6-2	342	11-10-1976	1	Cincinnati
98	Robbins, Fred	DT	6-4	306	3-25-1977	4	Wake Forest
92	Strahan, Michael	DE	6-5	275	11-21-1971	11	Texas Southern
72	Umenyiora, Osi	DE	6-3	280	11-16-1980	1	Troy State
99	Washington, Keith	DE	6-4	285	12-18-1972	8	UNLV
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
25	Allen, Will	CB	5-10	196	8-5-1978	3	Syracuse
42	Brewer, Jack	S	6-1	190	1-8-1979	2	Minnesota
39	Clark, Ryan	S	5-11	200	10-12-1979	2	LSU
21	Cousin, Terry	CB	5-9	181	3-11-1975	7	South Carolina
29	Green, Ray	CB	6-3	195	3-22-1977	4	South Carolina
35	LeBlanc, Clarence	S	6-3	210	3-26-1977	1	LSU
24	Peterson, William	CB	6-1	200	6-15-1979	3	Western Illinois
23	Stoutmire, Omar	S	5-11	205	7-9-1974	7	Fresno State
41	Walker, Frank	CB	5-10	198	8-6-1980	1	Tuskegee
36	Williams, Shaun	S	6-2	218	10-10-1976	6	UCLA
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
51	Emmons, Carlos	LB	6-5	250	9-3-1973	8	Arkansas State
54	Green, Barrett	LB	6-1	225	10-29-1977	4	West Virginia
54	Greisen, Nick	LB	6-1	245	8-10-1979	2	Wisconsin
59	Lewis, Kevin	LB	6-1	235	10-6-1978	4	Duke
51	Mallard, Wesly	LB	6-1	230	11-21-1978	2	Oregon
93	Monk, Quincy	LB	6-3	250	1-30-1979	2	North Carolina
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
8	Bryant, Matt	K	5-9	200	5-29-1975	2	Baylor
10	Feagles, Jeff	P	6-1	215	3-7-1966	16	Miami (FL)

TOMASSO DEROSA

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	4	Manning, Eli	QB	6-4	218	1-3-81	Mississippi
2	2	Snee, Chris	G	6-2	314	1-8-82	Boston College
4	1	Torbor, Reggie	DE	6-2	254	1-25-81	Auburn
5	4	Wilson, Gibril	S	6-1	197	11-21-81	Tennessee
6	3	Taylor, Jamaar	WR	6-1	197	2-25-81	Texas A&M
7	2	Strojny, Drew	T	6-7	327	6-30-81	Duke
7	52	Hilton, Isaac	DE	6-3	251	2-26-81	Hampton

RICH KANE

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Eli Manning
FB	Jim Finn
RB	Tiki Barber
LT	Luke Petitgout
LG	Wayne Lucier
C	Shaun O'Hara
RG	David Diehl
RT	Barry Stokes
TE	Jeremy Shockey
WR	Ike Hilliard
WR	Amani Toomer

DEFENSE

LE	Michael Strahan
LT	Fred Robbins
RT	William Joseph
RE	Osi Umenyiora
LLB	Carlos Emmons
MLB	Nick Greisen
RLB	Barrett Green
LCB	Will Allen
RCB	Will Peterson
SS	Shaun Williams
FS	Omar Stoutmire

SPECIAL TEAMS

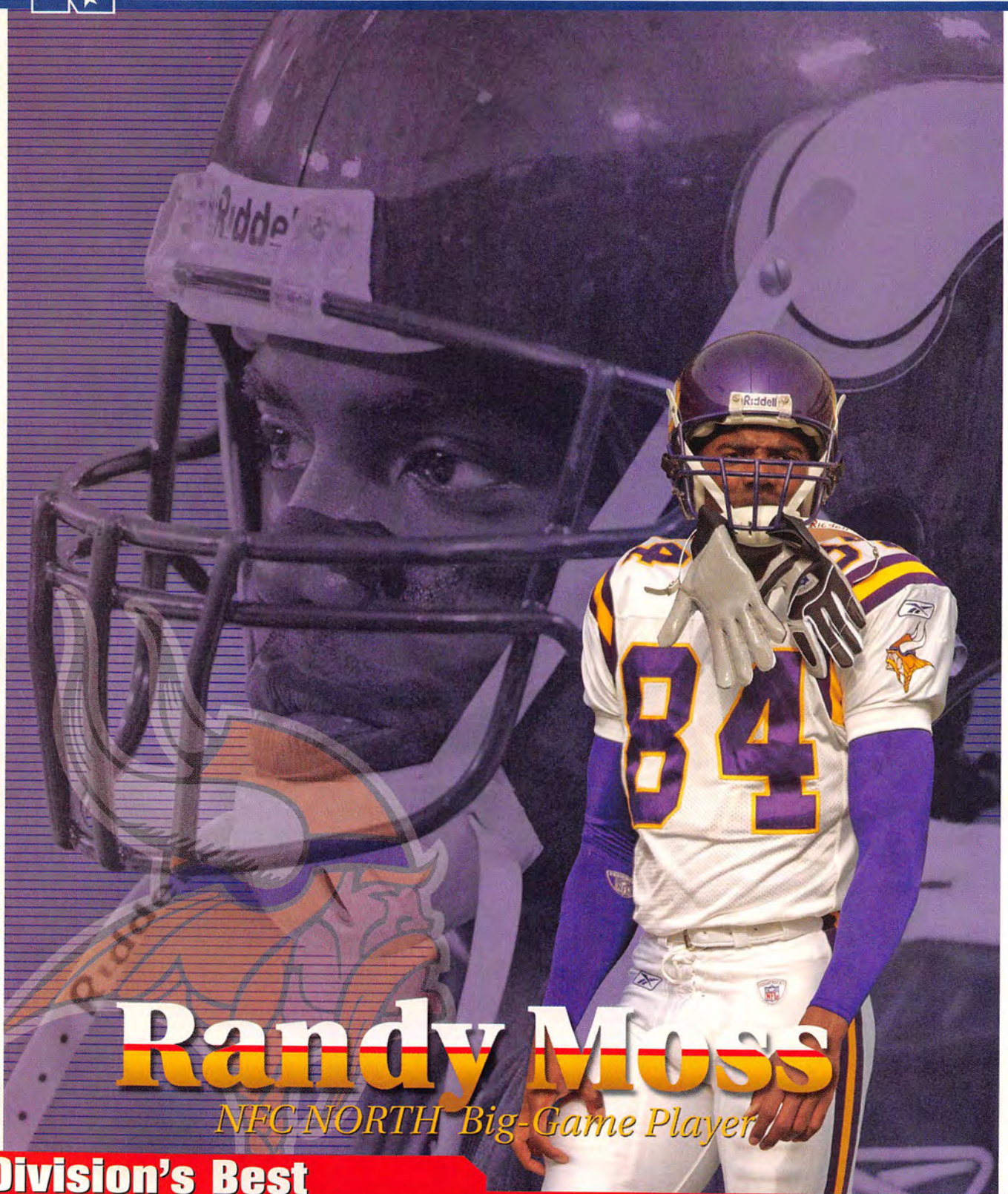
P	Jeff Feagles
K	Matt Bryant
PR	Delvin Joyce
KR	Delvin Joyce

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ Philadelphia	
Sept. 12	4:15
	Score:
WEEK 2 vs. Washington	
Sept. 19	1:00
	Score:
WEEK 3 vs. Cleveland	
Sept. 26	1:00
	Score:
WEEK 4 @ Green Bay	
Oct. 3	1:00
	Score:
WEEK 5 @ Dallas	
Oct. 10	1:00
	Score:
WEEK 6 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 7 vs. Detroit	
Oct. 24	1:00
	Score:
WEEK 8 @ Minnesota	
Oct. 31	1:00
	Score:
WEEK 9 vs. Chicago	
Nov. 7	4:05
	Score:
WEEK 10 @ Arizona	
Nov. 14	4:15
	Score:
WEEK 11 vs. Atlanta	
Nov. 21	4:15
	Score:
WEEK 12 vs. Philadelphia	
Nov. 28	1:00
	Score:
WEEK 13 @ Washington	
Dec. 5	4:15
	Score:
WEEK 14 @ Baltimore	
Dec. 12	1:00
	Score:
WEEK 15 vs. Pittsburgh	
Dec. 18	1:30
	Score:
WEEK 16 @ Cincinnati	
Dec. 26	1:00
	Score:
WEEK 17 vs. Dallas	
Jan. 2	8:30
	Score:

All times Eastern



DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS; BACKGROUND: RICH GABRIELSON

Randy Moss

NFC NORTH Big-Game Player

Division's Best

BIG-GAME PLAYER	RUSHER	RECEIVER	TACKLER	SPECIAL-TEAMS WARRIOR
Randy Moss, WR Minnesota	**Ahman Green, RB Green Bay**	**Randy Moss, WR Minnesota**	**Brian Urlacher, LB Chicago**	**Robert Ferguson, WR Green Bay**
For one game, you get to line up four NFC North team rosters and pick one player. Moss is that player.	Enjoyed his best season, including a 98-yard touchdown run.	Still football's top deep threat and amazingly durable.	Could become even more productive in Lovie Smith's scheme.	Led team in tackles and returned some kickoffs despite starting only 12 games.

The Vikings have tired of standing on the sidelines at playoff time.

SCOTT BOEHM

Minnesota's offensive firepower should win out in a division that needs to get on the defensive

By Don Pierson, Chicago Tribune

Winning three division titles in a row is a worthy goal for anyone in the NFC North. It won't be easy for the Packers, who nevertheless enter as top contenders again.

They won their second straight division title last season by a solitary, desperation-pass completion by Arizona that knocked the Vikings out of the division lead and the postseason in the final game.

The Vikings have played the Packers even over the last six seasons, splitting their series four times. It looks like the first team that can manage a sweep can win the next one.

Neither the Bears nor Lions look like contenders this year, but new Chicago coach Lovie Smith hastens to point out the Carolina Panthers didn't look like a contender last year, either.

Every team in the division has a new defensive coordinator. The Bears had the highest-ranking defense last year, 14th.

1. MINNESOTA VIKINGS page 134

Their firepower on offense, with Randy Moss, Michael Bennett and Daunte Culpepper all healthy, is unmatched in the division. Their experience last season of fading down the stretch is likely to have a maturing effect over the long haul. Coach Mike Tice lost a valuable aid when his former high school coach, George O'Leary, left for the head-coaching job at Central Florida. But the Vikings were happy to get Ted Cottrell to replace him and add two defensive starters in the draft in Kenechi Udeze and Dontarrious Thomas.

2. GREEN BAY PACKERS page 138

With the toughest schedule in a division forced to face both the AFC South and NFC East, the Packers have a hard road ahead.

They play three Monday night games, one Sunday night game, and have only five days to prepare for their Christmas Eve showdown in Minnesota, plus games against fellow division winners Carolina and St. Louis that no other NFC North team has.

Still, coach Mike Sherman's four-year record is impressive and Sherman still has Brett Favre. It's the defense that has to improve under new coordinator Bob Slowik.

3. CHICAGO BEARS page 142

Smith will try to improve on fired Dick Jauron's 7-9 exit year with young quarterback Rex Grossman, who started only three games at the end of last season.

It will be up to Grossman to try to improve an offense that finished 28th. Newcomer Thomas Jones, a castoff by two teams, will try to upgrade the running game.

Smith's St. Louis Rams defense led the league in creating turnovers. New defensive coordinator Ron Rivera, an ex-Bear who coached at Philadelphia, plans to make the Bears' defense a faster, more aggressive unit.

4. DETROIT LIONS page 146

The worst team in the league over the last three years, the Lions have nowhere to go but up. They hope they landed at least three starters in the draft in receiver Roy Williams, running back Kevin Jones and linebacker Teddy Lehman.

Coach Steve Mariucci expects third-year quarterback Joey Harrington to blossom with more help. Ex-Lion player Jauron moves from Chicago to Detroit as defensive coordinator.

TEAMMATE	SENSE OF HUMOR	INTELLECT	SIDELINE STRATEGIST	FRONT-OFFICE EXECUTIVE
Daunte Culpepper, QB Minnesota	**Brett Favre, QB Green Bay**	**Matt Birk, C Minnesota**	**Mike Sherman, head coach Green Bay**	**Paul Wiggin, director of pro scouting Minnesota**
Keeps Randy Moss happy, which keeps everybody happy.	His "retirement" is a joke. He's having too much fun.	There just aren't many Pro Bowl players with Harvard degrees in economics.	He's won 43 games in four seasons.	No personnel department has been better over the years.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 1 2003 RECORD: 9-7

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Steve Martin, DT** (HOU)
- **Marcus Robinson, WR** (BAL)
- **Jermaine Wiggins, TE** (CAR)
- **Antoine Winfield, CB** (BUF)
- **Tyrone Carter, DB** (NYJ)
- **Darren Bennett, P** (SD)

STADIUM FACTS

Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome

Capacity: **64,121** Turf: **Artificial**
Tickets: **612-338-4537**
Web site: **www.vikings.com**

Avg. Attendance **64,180**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **100.1**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$59.00**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$4.00 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.50 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

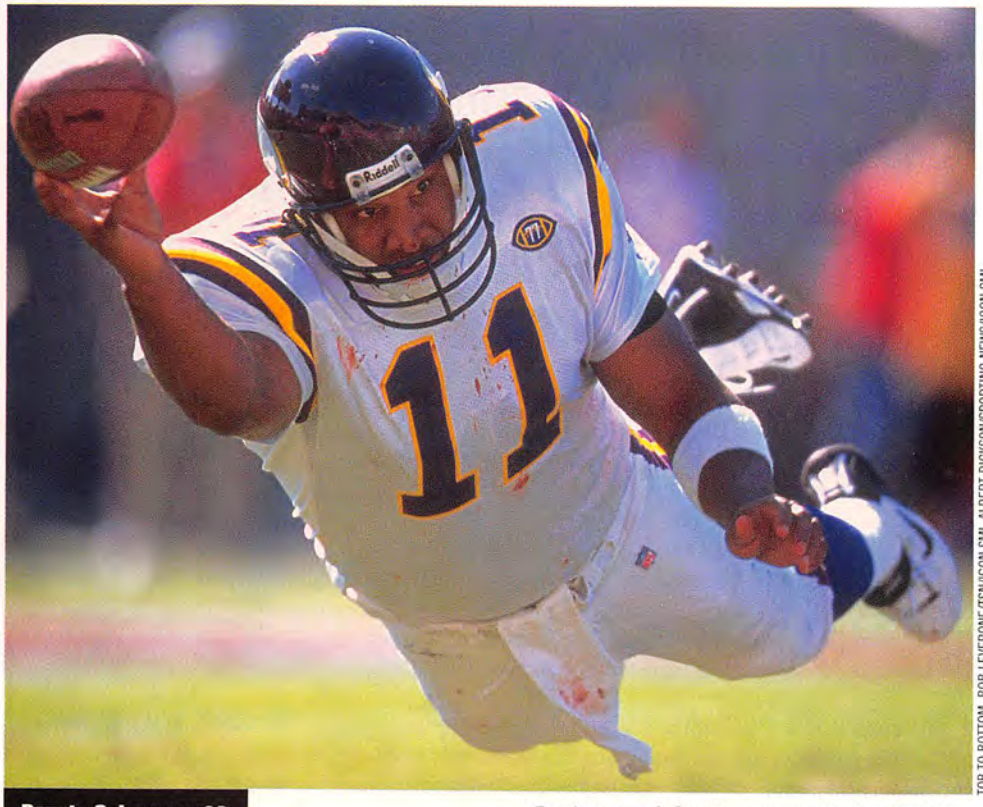
QUICK HITS

FACT: Pro Bowl center Matt Birk attended the same high school (Cretin-Derham Hall) as Panthers QB Chris Weinke, Twins catcher Joe Mauer and baseball Hall-of-Famer Paul Molitor.

STAT: Rookie Nate Burleson was Minnesota's second-leading wide receiver last season with 29 receptions—tied for 128th in the league.

LOOK IT UP: The Vikings became just the third team in the Super Bowl era to start the season 6-0 and fail to qualify for the playoffs (Rams in 1968, Redskins in 1978).

THE COUNT:
1 – Final NFL ranking on offense, first time in Vikings history.
3 – Fourth-down conversions allowed by Vikings in final Arizona drive.
30 – Three-and-out drives by Minnesota, fewest in the NFL.



Daunte Culpepper, QB

Look for Tice to be right for Vikes in '04, with defense getting serious boost from two rookies

Bennett's healthy return could be the difference-maker

After missing the playoffs on a last-ditch touchdown pass by Arizona, Vikings coach Mike Tice knows there's only one way to respond.

Tice kept warning that his team wasn't as good as its 6-0 start. Now it will be expected to be better than the 9-7 finish. The Vikings were the only winning team to miss the NFC playoffs—small consolation but large incentive.

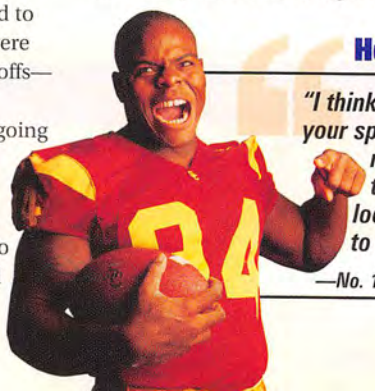
"My immediate thought was, 'How am I going to use the last game as a motivational weapon and not a pout session?'" Tice recalls. "After about eight days of pouting myself, I realized we had achieved a lot in two years and we were close to where we wanted to be. We still have a lot of work to do."

Getting two defensive starters in the draft in Kenechi Udeze and Dontarrious Thomas was a good start.

Offensive line — Grade: B

Though huge and one of the few units in the league to start all 16 games intact, the line has yet to live up to its own lofty expectations. The left side is set with tackle Bryant McKinnie, guard Chris Liwienski and center Matt Birk. The right side of guard David Dixon and tackle Mike Rosenthal needs to get better.

Dixon has seen his prime and Rosenthal was adequate after arriving last year from the Giants. Tice would like to see Lewis Kelly establish himself. Everett Lindsay and Cory Withrow are experienced backups. Large draft pick Nat Dorsey (6-7, 322 pounds) of Georgia Tech should help.



He said it:

"I think that if you earn your spot, you gain the respect of your teammates ... I'm looking forward to contributing. ..."

—No. 1 pick Kenechi Udeze

Quarterbacks

Grade: A-

After leading the league in giveaways in 2002, Daunte Culpepper took care of the ball much better last season, completing 65 percent of his passes and leading the NFC in passing efficiency. Culpepper cut his fumbles from 23 to 16, still more than Tice would like, but Culpepper proved a better run-pass threat than Donovan McNabb. Now the only two starters left from the so-called "quarterback draft" of 1999 are in a race to see who gets to a Super Bowl first.

Gus Frerotte was outstanding in two winning starts as a sub and will return to provide comfort for a good offense.

Running backs

Grade: B

Michael Bennett wasn't healthy until game No. 8 last year and carried only 90 times. He is expected to be completely healed from a foot injury and ready to resume his breakout season of 2002. Moe Williams and rookie Onterrio Smith shared duties and both had flashes, but Bennett's speed cannot be duplicated. Smith will continue to share the load in order to keep Bennett fresh. Tice likes the potential of fourth-rounder Mewelde Moore.

Tight end Jim Kleinsasser was re-signed to continue his role as a vital blocker in the running game. Charles Stackhouse is the fullback, but the Vikings are expected to start three wide receivers.

Receivers

Grade: A

Funny how Randy Moss has a reputation for playing only when he wants to play yet never has missed a game in his six scintillating years in the league. His latest season might have been his finest, though not his flashiest. He caught more passes (111) for more yards (1,632) than ever and matched his rookie number of 17 touchdowns.

Signing Marcus Robinson from Baltimore gives Culpepper a second deep threat, while the presence of Kelly Campbell and Nate Burleson allows offensive coordinator Scott Linehan to start with a three-wideout set. Adding big Jermaine Wiggins as a pass-catching tight end also helps.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	393.4	1
Rushing	146.4	4
Passing	246.9	4
Scoring	416	6
Punt Returns	6.9	28
Kick Returns	20.1	26
Red Zone TD %	56.4	7T
Total Defense	334.8	23
Against Rush	117.4	17
Against Pass	217.3	26
Points Allowed	353	23
Interceptions	28	2
Sacks	37	15
Turnover Diff.	+11	5

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
336	124	194	18

RED ZONE OFFENSE

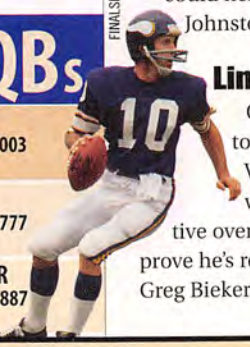
Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
55	256	31	13

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
15	32	4	4

VIKINGS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **FRAN TARKENTON**
   Career Passing Yards: **47,003**
   Career TD Passes: **342**
2. **TOMMY KRAMER**
   Career Passing Yards: **24,777**
   Career TD Passes: **159**
3. **DAUNTE CULPEPPER**
   Career Passing Yards: **13,887**
   Career TD Passes: **90**



FINALSHOT/JRP

Defensive line

Grade: B-

New defensive coordinator Ted Cottrell hopes he drafted another double-digit pass rusher in Udeze, who will share the role with converted linebacker Nick Rogers opposite left end Kenny Mixon. Udeze was a probable top-10 pick until concern over a shoulder injury caused him to slide to No. 20, where the Vikings thought he was worth the gamble.

Tackles Chris Hovan and Kevin Williams are slotted inside. Williams had 10 sacks as a rookie while switching between end and tackle, but seems settled inside. Newcomer Steve Martin could help on the nose. Billy Lyon and Lance Johnstone are backups.

Linebackers

Grade: C+

Chris Claiborne continues his quest to find the right position and the Vikings hope it is the strongside, where they expect him to be disruptive over the tight end. E.J. Henderson must prove he's ready to man the middle in place of Greg Biekert, while rookie Thomas is expected

Vikings use PR blitz to make sure Eller gets his due in Hall

Defensive end Carl Eller always knew he had the skills to make the big play but that his fellow Vikings would be there to help. Indeed, Minnesota's fearsome defensive line of the 1970s nicknamed the "Purple People Eaters" dominated not just because of talent, but because of the cohesion of stars like Eller, Alan Page and Jim Marshall. So it's only fitting that while Eller, 62, was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame on his merits as a member of the Class of 2004, he found his Vikings providing a crucial boost.

The six-time Pro Bowler and two-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year was a finalist for the 13th time but, more important, was in his last year of eligibility as a modern-era player. Had he not made the cut (along with John Elway and Barry Sanders), Eller would have had to wait for the Senior Selection Committee to take up his case.

"I was surprised it took this long," says Eller, who now organizes community programs and grants for the state of Minnesota and is opening a restaurant called the Purple People Eatery in the Minneapolis area.

Vikings owner Red McCombs and the team's director of research and development, Chad Ostlund, were not going to sit idly by, crossing their fingers and hoping Eller would be a part of the Aug. 8 ceremony in Canton, Ohio. Ostlund coordinated a campaign, hitting the Hall voters with letters from the likes of Bart Starr and Dan Dierdorf, phone calls from former Vikings coaches Bud Grant and Jerry Burns and rival coaches like Chuck Noll and Chuck Knox, plus a DVD showing Eller in action over his 15 years as a Viking.

The reminders seem to help. The Vikings had gone 10 years after Page's 1988 election without any player inductees, but since McCombs put Ostlund on the case in 1998 to rectify things, safety Paul Krause, offensive tackle Ron Yary and now Eller have all made the cut.

"Having it in black and white for the voters is helpful," Eller says. "And it makes me feel good that the team would make the effort."

The Vikings threw a small celebration for Eller, with Page, longtime Minnesota center Mick Tingelhoff and Marshall among those attending. Marshall was also among the 15 finalists, but didn't make the cut and now must pin his hopes on the senior selectors.

Eller says he may invite his good friend to introduce him in Canton "if it would help him get the exposure he needs."

But he's torn because he knows how much it would mean to his son Regis, 23, who played football at Northwestern.

"He was very protective of me and bore the brunt of the anguish," Eller says.

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 9, Lost 7

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	30-25	at Green Bay
09/14	W	24-13	Chicago
09/21	W	23-13	at Detroit
09/28	W	35-7	San Francisco
10/05	W	39-26	at Atlanta
10/19	W	28-20	Denver
10/26	L	29-17	New York Giants
11/02	L	30-27	Green Bay
11/09	L	42-28	at San Diego
11/16	L	28-18	at Oakland
11/23	W	24-14	Detroit
11/30	L	48-17	at St. Louis
12/07	W	34-7	Seattle
12/14	L	13-10	at Chicago
12/20	W	45-20	Kansas City
12/28	L	18-17	at Arizona

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
M. Williams	174	745	4.3	61	5
O. Smith	107	579	5.4	47	5
Bennett	90	447	5.0	28	1
Culpepper	73	422	5.8	42	4
Campbell	10	71	7.1	19	0
Chapman	15	33	2.2	6	0
Moss	6	18	3.0	11	0
Johnson	2	15	7.5	15	0
Kleinsasser	2	15	7.5	12	0
Avery	1	0	0.0	0	0
Stackhouse	1	0	0.0	0	0
Frerotte	12	-2	-0.2	4	0
Vikings	**493**	**2343**	**4.8**	**61**	**15**
Opponents	**387**	**1879**	**4.9**	**73t**	**22**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Moss	111	1632	14.7	72	17
M. Williams	65	644	9.9	42	3
Kleinsasser	46	401	8.7	19	4
Burleson	29	455	15.7	52	2
Campbell	25	522	20.9	72t	4
Bates	15	151	10.1	18	1
O. Smith	15	129	8.6	20	0
Bennett	12	132	11.0	40	0
Stackhouse	6	30	5.0	10	0
Goodwin	4	26	6.5	12	0
Avery	2	24	12.0	13	1
Howry	2	15	7.5	8	0
Chapman	1	8	8.0	8	0
Vikings	**333**	**4169**	**12.5**	**72t**	**32**
Opponents	**311**	**3722**	**12.0**	**51**	**17**

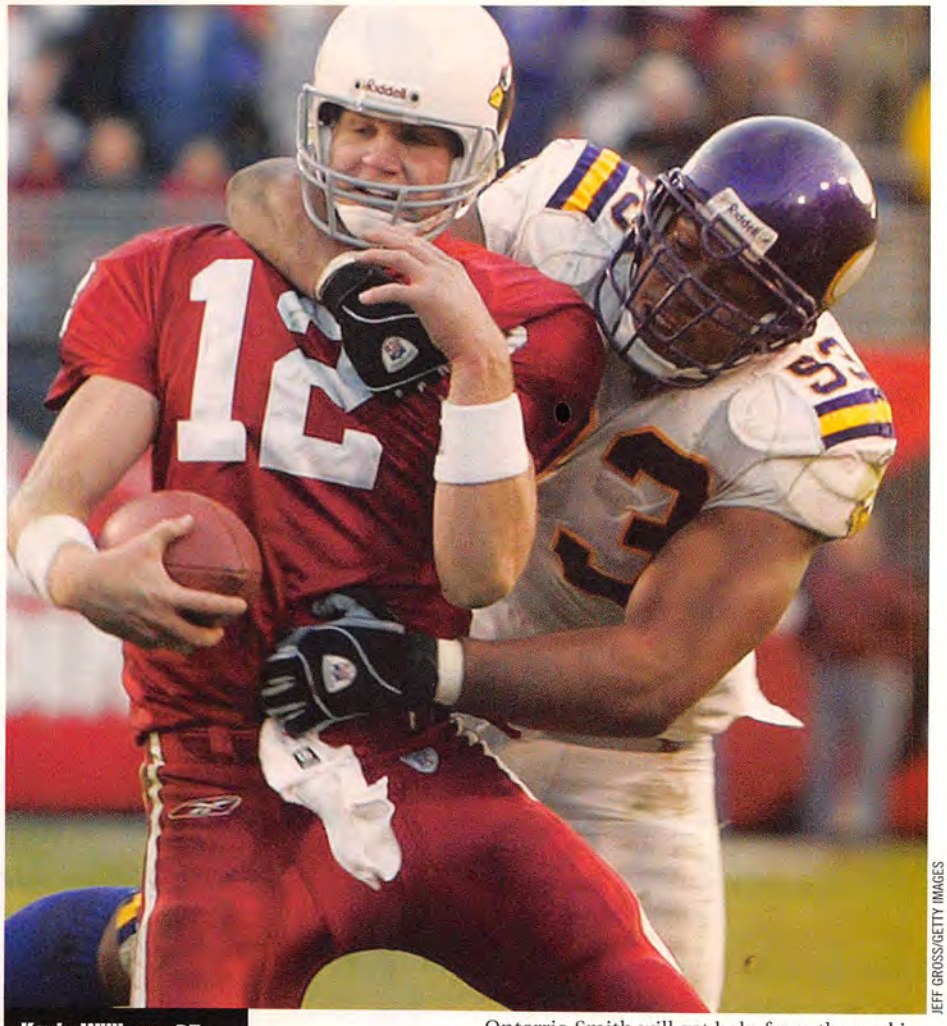
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Culpepper	454	295	3479	25	11
Frerotte	65	38	690	7	2
Moss	1	0	0	0	0
Vikings	**520**	**333**	**4169**	**32**	**13**
Opponents	**531**	**311**	**3722**	**17**	**28**

SACKS

K. Williams 10.5, Johnstone 10.0, Mixon 5.0, Claiborne 3.0, B. Williams 3.0, Hovan 2.0, Biekert 1.0, Russell 1.0, Wiley 1.0, Robbins 0.5

Vikings 37.0, Opponents 42.0

t=touchdown



Kevin Williams, DT

JEFF GROSS/GETTY IMAGES

to either start very soon or push Raonall Smith to replace Rogers. Mike Nattiel will also play a role in his second year and could surprise.

Secondary

Grade: B

Tice made it clear in free agency that he wasn't just trying to sign a cornerback; he was trying to sign Antoine Winfield. Mission accomplished, to the chagrin of the New York Jets, who thought they had him. Winfield will move second-year man Brian Williams from the left side to the right side ahead of Ken Irvin, who will join Eric Kelly as a nickel-back option.

At safety, the Vikings got a league-leading 17 interceptions from Brian Russell (nine) and Corey Chavous (eight). That's more than 21 NFL teams had last season. Tice welcomes the return of Tyrone Carter from the Jets to join Willie Offord as a backup.

Special teams

Grade: C+

Adding veteran Darren Bennett from San Diego gives the Vikings a booming veteran punter who should enjoy extending his career indoors. Kicker Aaron Elling will have to improve on his .500 percentage from outside 40 yards. Keenan Howry and Onterrio Smith will get help from the rookie Moore on returns.

Management

Grade: B

With owner Red McCombs constantly embroiled in stadium issues and the threat of moving to Los Angeles looming, it's not easy for his management team to maintain consistency. Yet there aren't many personnel offices that do a better job and Tice has shown an ability to work with everybody, including the mercurial Moss. He deflated exploratory offseason trade conversations involving Moss by saying they had a good laugh over it after demanding three No. 1 draft choices in return.

Bottom line

The Vikings appear ready to use last year's bitter disappointment as a springboard. The schedule is difficult for all NFC North teams. Minnesota gets Green Bay at home on Christmas Eve and hope it turns into a nice gift. Missing the playoffs would be even more disappointing this year.

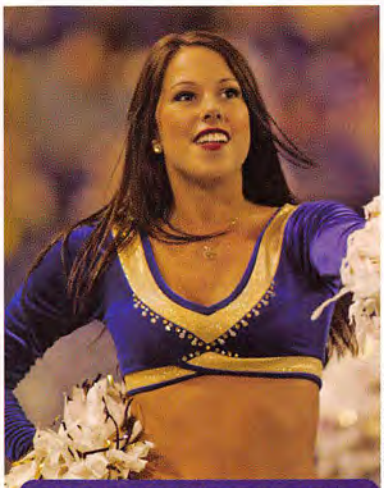
VIKINGS ROSTER

Mike Tice, head coach

Charlie Baggett, wide receivers; **Brian Baker**, defensive line; **Pete Bercich**, defensive asst.-asst. defensive line; **Ted Cottrell**, defensive coord.-linebackers; **Dean Dalton**, running backs; **Randy Hanson**, offensive quality control; **Chuck Knox, Jr.**, defensive backfield; **Scott Linehan**, offensive coord.-quarterbacks; **Steve Loney**, offensive line; **Jim Panagos**, defensive quality control; **Kevin Ross**, asst. secondary coach; **John Tice**, tight ends-asst. offensive line; **Rusty Tillman**, special teams

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
11	Culpepper, Daunte	QB	6-4	264	1-28-1977	5	Central Florida
12	Frerotte, Gus	QB	6-3	237	7-31-1971	10	Tulsa
13	Hill, Shaun	QB	6-3	235	1-9-1980	0	Maryland
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
78	Birk, Matt	C	6-4	300	7-23-1976	6	Harvard
71	Dixon, David	G	6-5	343	1-5-1969	10	Arizona State
61	Kelly, Lewis	T	6-4	306	4-21-1977	4	South Carolina State
76	Liwienski, Chris	G	6-5	325	8-2-1975	5	Indiana
74	McKinnie, Bryant	T	6-8	346	9-23-1979	2	Miami (FL)
75	Rosenthal, Mike	T	6-7	310	6-10-1977	5	Notre Dame
60	Withrow, Cory	C	6-2	287	4-5-1975	4	Washington State
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
33	Avery, John	RB	5-9	188	1-11-1976	3	Mississippi
23	Bennett, Michael	RB	5-9	211	8-13-1978	3	Wisconsin
28	Ned, Larry	RB	5-11	217	8-23-1978	1	San Diego State
32	Smith, Onterrio	RB	5-10	214	12-8-1980	1	Oregon
45	Stackhouse, Charles	RB	6-2	250	4-11-1980	2	Mississippi
20	Williams, Moe	RB	6-1	205	7-26-1974	8	Kentucky
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
86	Angulo, Richard	TE	6-7	260	8-13-1980	1	Western New Mexico
87	Berton, Sean	TE	6-4	272	10-31-1979	1	North Carolina State
81	Burleson, Nate	WR	6-1	192	8-19-1981	1	Nevada
16	Campbell, Kelly	WR	5-10	173	7-23-1980	2	Georgia Tech
82	Howry, Keenan	WR	5-10	172	6-17-1981	1	Oregon
40	Kleinsasser, Jim	TE	6-3	272	1-31-1977	5	North Dakota
43	Liddiard, Brody	TE	6-4	240	6-12-1977	4	Colorado
84	Moss, Randy	WR	6-4	200	2-13-1977	6	Marshall
87	Robinson, Marcus	WR	6-3	215	2-27-1975	6	South Carolina
	Wiggins, Jermaine	TE	6-2	255	1-18-1975	4	Georgia
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
99	Hovan, Chris	DT	6-2	296	5-12-1978	4	Boston College
51	Johnstone, Lance	DE	6-4	250	6-11-1973	8	Temple
96	Lyon, Billy	DE	6-5	304	12-10-1973	6	Marshall
	Martin, Steve	DT	6-4	292	5-31-1974	8	Missouri
79	Mixon, Kenny	DE	6-4	271	5-31-1975	6	LSU
94	Wiley, Chuck	DE	6-5	275	3-6-1975	5	LSU
93	Williams, Kevin	DT	6-5	311	8-16-1980	1	Oklahoma State
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Carter, Tyrone	S	5-8	190	3-31-1976	4	Minnesota
21	Chavous, Corey	S	6-1	205	1-15-1976	6	Vanderbilt
22	Irvin, Ken	CB	5-11	182	7-11-1972	9	Memphis
31	Jones, Rushen	CB	5-10	194	8-4-1980	1	Vanderbilt
25	Kelly, Eric	CB	5-10	201	1-15-1977	3	Kentucky
38	Nelson, Rhett	CB	6-1	200	2-16-1980	1	Colorado State
24	Offord, Willie	S	6-1	216	12-22-1978	2	South Carolina
27	Russell, Brian	S	6-2	204	2-5-1978	2	San Diego State
29	Williams, Brian	CB	5-11	198	7-2-1979	2	North Carolina State
26	Winfield, Antoine	CB	5-9	180	6-24-1977	5	Ohio State
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
54	Biekert, Greg	LB	6-2	253	3-14-1969	11	Colorado
55	Claiborne, Chris	LB	6-3	259	7-26-1978	5	Southern California
52	Crockett, Henri	LB	6-2	240	10-28-1974	7	Florida State
56	Henderson, E.J.	LB	6-1	245	8-3-1980	1	Maryland
59	Nattiel, Michael	LB	6-1	227	11-8-1980	1	Florida
58	Rogers, Nick	LB	6-2	250	5-31-1979	2	Georgia Tech
57	Smith, Raonall	LB	6-2	241	10-22-1978	1	Washington State
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
2	Bennett, Darren	P	6-5	235	1-9-1965	9	None
8	Elling, Aaron	K	6-2	201	5-31-1978	1	Wyoming
4	Johnson, Eddie	P	6-3	236	3-2-1981	1	Idaho State

MICHAEL ZITO/SPORTSCHROME



RICH GABRIELSON

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

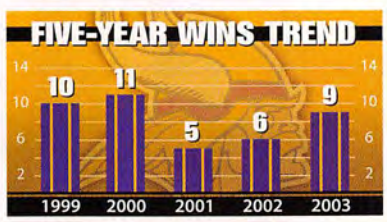
QB	Daunte Culpepper
RB	Michael Bennett
LT	Bryant McKinnie
LG	Chris Liwienski
C	Matt Birk
RG	David Dixon
RT	Mike Rosenthal
TE	Jim Kleinsasser
WR	Marcus Robinson
WR	Randy Moss
WR	Nate Burleson

DEFENSE

LE	Kenny Mixon
LT	Kevin Williams
RT	Chris Hovan
RE	Kenechi Udeze
LLB	Chris Claiborne
MLB	E.J. Henderson
RLB	Dontarrious Thomas
LCB	Antoine Winfield
RCB	Brian Williams
SS	Corey Chavous
FS	Brian Russell

SPECIAL TEAMS

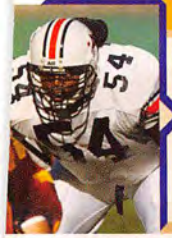
P	Darren Bennett
K	Aaron Elling
PR	Keenan Howry
KR	Mewelde Moore



SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Dallas	
Sept. 12	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 2 @ Philadelphia	
Sept. 20	9:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 3 vs. Chicago	
Sept. 26	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 4 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 5 @ Houston	
Oct. 10	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 6 @ New Orleans	
Oct. 17	8:30
W/L	Score:
WEEK 7 vs. Tennessee	
Oct. 24	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 8 vs. New York Giants	
Oct. 31	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 9 @ Indianapolis	
Nov. 8	9:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 10 @ Green Bay	
Nov. 14	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 11 vs. Detroit	
Nov. 21	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 12 vs. Jacksonville	
Nov. 28	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 13 @ Chicago	
Dec. 5	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 14 vs. Seattle	
Dec. 12	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 15 @ Detroit	
Dec. 19	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 16 vs. Green Bay	
Dec. 24	3:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 17 @ Washington	
Jan. 2	1:00
W/L	Score:

All times Eastern



2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	20	Udeze, Kenechi	DE	6-3	287	3-5-83	USC
2	16	Thomas, Dontarrious	LB	6-2	241	9-2-80	Auburn
3	25	Scott, Darrion	DE	6-3	271	10-25-81	Ohio State
4	19	Dorsey, Nat	T	6-7	322	9-9-83	Georgia Tech
4	23	Moore, Mewelde	RB	5-10	205	7-24-82	Tulane
5	23	Davis, Rod	LB	6-2	239	4-2-81	Southern Miss
6	19	Eiland, Deandre'	S	5-11	202	6-4-82	South Carolina
7	19	Dugan, Jeff	TE	6-3	258	4-8-81	Maryland

GREEN BAY PACKERS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 2 2003 RECORD: 10-6

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Mark Roman, S** (CIN)
- **Chris Watson, CB-KR** (DET)

STADIUM FACTS

Lambeau Field

Capacity: **72,515** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **800-851-7225**
Web site: **www.packers.com**

Avg. Attendance **70,352**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **97.0**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$54.40**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$25.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$2.75**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$4.75 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.00 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: During Brett Favre's current streak of 189 consecutive regular-season starts, a total of 172 other quarterbacks have started at least one NFL game. The Bears have used 16 different starters over that span.

STAT: The Packers are 18-2 all-time in the postseason at home and in neutral-site games combined, but just 6-11 in road contests.

LOOK IT UP: Brett Favre's first NFL completion was to himself, as he caught his own deflected pass against Tampa Bay on Sept. 13, 1992. He has completed 3,959 passes since then.

THE COUNT:
108 – NFL-leading regular-season wins for Green Bay, the last 10 years.
74 – Touchdown passes needed by Favre to catch all-time leader Dan Marino.
71,457 – Attendance for playoff win over Seattle, largest crowd in Lambeau Field history.

Pack needs to find a spark somewhere other than offensive backfield

Favre, Green can't carry Green Bay much longer by themselves

That fourth down-and-26 will haunt the Packers until further notice. Failure to stop the Eagles in a seemingly impossible situation prevented the Packers from getting to the NFC title game.

It also meant the departure of defensive coordinator Ed Donatell and the arrival of another defense-oriented draft, starting with cornerbacks Ahmad Carroll and Joey Thomas.

Coach/General Manager Mike Sherman has leaned heavily toward defense in all four of his drafts, figuring that's the best way to help quarterback Brett Favre. Yet the defense ranked a mediocre 17th last season. New coordinator Bob Slowik must improve it.

Ahman Green, RB

JOE ROBBINS

Offensive line — Grade: A

Re-signing left tackle Chad Clifton protects Favre's back. The line is solid with right tackle Mark Tauscher, guards Mike Wahle and Marco Rivera and center Mike Flanagan. Kevin Barry is a terrific blocker as a third tackle and Grey Ruegamer is solid backing up. The starters played all 16 games last season.

But the reality is this is probably their last season intact because both guards come up for contract renewal. Favre's comfort level may never get better. He was sacked only 19 times last year.

Quarterbacks — Grade: A

In all the hullabaloo over Favre's eventual replacement, the main man continues to be taken for granted. As he turns 35 this season, fans will begin to wonder whether he still has the ability or drive to carry this team. Maybe the 13th year without missing a start will bring good luck.

Favre stirred fans last December with a career performance in Oakland the night after the untimely death of his father. Then what looked like a magical postseason ended abruptly with a desperate interception in the overtime loss to the Eagles. The Packers hoped

to sign Tim Couch to join Craig Nall in the backup stable.

Running backs

Grade: A

Ahman Green even quit fumbling while leading the NFC in rushing with a career-high 1,883 yards and averaging a career-high 5.3 yards per carry. His 15 touchdowns also were a career best, which means at age 27 Green appears to be in the middle of his prime.

Sherman usually promises to relieve Green of his workhorse duties by letting Najeh Davenport or Tony Fisher get touches, but Green's 355 carries led the NFC and represented yet another career high. Fullback William Henderson will get pushed by Nick Luchey.

Receivers

Grade: B-

Wideouts Javon Walker, Robert Ferguson, Donald Driver and tight end Bubba Franks are no longer young or inexperienced, so this group must step up with more big plays and more consistency. Carl Ford is coming off injury as a reserve with a chance to play.

Walker and Ferguson have shown flashes. Driver is coming off a down year after a promising 2002. Franks caught only 30 passes and four touchdowns, the lowest numbers since his rookie year. David Martin is expected to contribute more because Favre's best years came when he had production from tight ends.

Defensive line

Grade: C

There's trouble ahead for new defensive coordinator Slowik and it starts up front. The Joe Johnson experiment was a flop. Nose tackle Gilbert Brown finally has run out of steam.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	362.4	4
Rushing	159.9	3
Passing	202.5	16
Scoring	442	4
Punt Returns	7.9	22
Kick Returns	23.6	5
Red Zone TD %	65.4	2
Total Defense	318.8	17
Against Rush	106.3	10
Against Pass	212.5	23
Points Allowed	307	11
Interceptions	21	8T
Sacks	34	24
Turnover Diff.	0	14T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
315	127	166	22

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
52	284	34	15

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
18	32	3	3

PACKERS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **BRETT FAVRE**
   Career Passing Yards: **45,646**
   Career TD Passes: **346**
2. **BART STARR**
   Career Passing Yards: **24,718**
   Career TD Passes: **152**
3. **ARNIE HERBER**
   Career Passing Yards: **8,316**
   Career TD Passes: **82**

FINALSHOT/JRP

The Packers are counting on a rejuvenated Grady Jackson to anchor the line. Jackson was outstanding after the Pack rescued him from New Orleans' doghouse. If he can put together two good seasons in a row, it will be a bonus.

Pass rusher Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila had 10 sacks in his first year as a full-time end, but he's too small to hold up consistently and needs to pace himself. Overachiever Aaron Kampman is the other end while underachiever Cletidus Hunt is Jackson's sidekick.

Backup Larry Smith should help, and there is room for big rookies Donnell Washington and Corey Williams. There is also hope for second-year prospect Kenny Peterson and backup Chukie Nwokorie. If former No. 1 pick Jamal Reynolds is ever going to do it, now is the time.

Linebackers

Grade: B-

Speedy Nick Barnett was a hit in the middle as a rookie and can only get better with experience. Barnett and outside backers Na'il Diggs and Hannibal Navies finished one-two-three in tackles while missing only one start among them, so they offer a solid unit backed up by Paris Lenon, Marcus Wilkins and Torrance Marshall.

Secondary

Grade: B-

Cornerback Mike McKenzie threatened to leave in a contract dispute, increasing the need for Carroll and Thomas. One may have to start opposite Al Harris, but the loss of McKenzie would hurt because he was the Pack's most consistent defensive player.

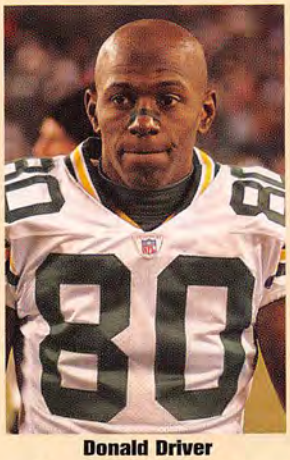
Homeless once himself, Driver doing his part to provide for poor families

Donald Driver knows the devastating effect homelessness can have on children. Driver, who spent parts of his childhood in Houston living out of dingy motels and even a U-Haul truck, turned to stealing cars and dealing drugs before he was sent to live with his grandmother, who helped turn his life around. Now, having graduated from Alcorn State and achieved stardom and wealth in the NFL, the Packers' wide receiver devotes his offseason time to helping families escape homelessness.

Driver spends some of his time visiting Green Bay's shelters to act as a mentor for abused and homeless mothers. "I let them know there is a way out but that it takes time," he says.

Driver himself is helping create that way out. The Donald Driver Foundation has already purchased two houses for homeless families—one in Houston and one in Green Bay—and during the offseason Driver ran football camps and golf tournaments in Houston and Green Bay to raise another $1 million for four more homes.

"My goal is not just to do this in Green Bay and Houston but eventually to be in all 50 states," he says. "Right now we're looking in Mississippi, to check if the land there is worth building on."



Donald Driver

TOMASSO DEROSA

Local agencies screen potential women (they must have jobs), who then write essays for Driver and his board, which consists mostly of family and close friends. The foundation provides more than just four walls and a roof. The homes come completely furnished, with a car and utilities paid for. The foundation also establishes a savings program so that over five years the families will have $12,000 to put toward this or another home.

"These women often have really bad credit," Driver says. "I try to give them some type of security."

He also provides mentoring, much of it himself. "These families are coming to my house—my kids mess around with their kids," he says, adding that what makes him happiest is seeing the children when they first get their own home.

"I want the friendship. We want to be part of their lives."

—Stuart Miller

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 10, Lost 6

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	30-25	Minnesota
09/14	W	31-6	Detroit
09/21	L	20-13	at Arizona
09/29	W	38-23	at Chicago
10/05	W	35-13	Seattle
10/12	L	40-34 (OT)	Kansas City
10/19	L	34-24	at St. Louis
11/02	W	30-27	at Minnesota
11/10	L	17-14	Philadelphia
11/16	W	20-13	at Tampa Bay
11/23	W	20-10	San Francisco
11/27	L	22-14	at Detroit
12/07	W	34-21	Chicago
12/14	W	38-21	at San Diego
12/22	W	41-7	at Oakland
12/28	W	31-3	Denver

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Green	355	1883	5.3	98t	15
Davenport	77	420	5.5	76t	2
Fisher	40	200	5.0	19	1
Driver	5	51	10.2	45	0
Favre	18	15	0.8	7	0
Luchey	1	3	3.0	3	0
J. Walker	2	1	0.5	1	0
Nall	2	-2	-1.0	-1	0
Pederson	6	-5	-0.8	0	0
Ferguson	1	-8	-8.0	-8	0
Packers	**507**	**2558**	**5.0**	**98t**	**18**
Opponents	**413**	**1701**	**4.1**	**67t**	**10**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Driver	52	621	11.9	41	2
Green	50	367	7.3	27	5
J. Walker	41	716	17.5	66t	9
Ferguson	38	520	13.7	47	4
Franks	30	241	8.0	24	4
Henderson	24	214	8.9	22	3
Fisher	21	206	9.8	32	2
Walls	20	222	11.1	36	1
Freeman	14	141	10.1	15	0
Martin	13	79	6.1	14	2
Davenport	6	38	6.3	12	0
Luchey	1	12	12.0	12	0
Packers	**310**	**3377**	**10.9**	**66t**	**32**
Opponents	**326**	**3600**	**11.0**	**68t**	**18**

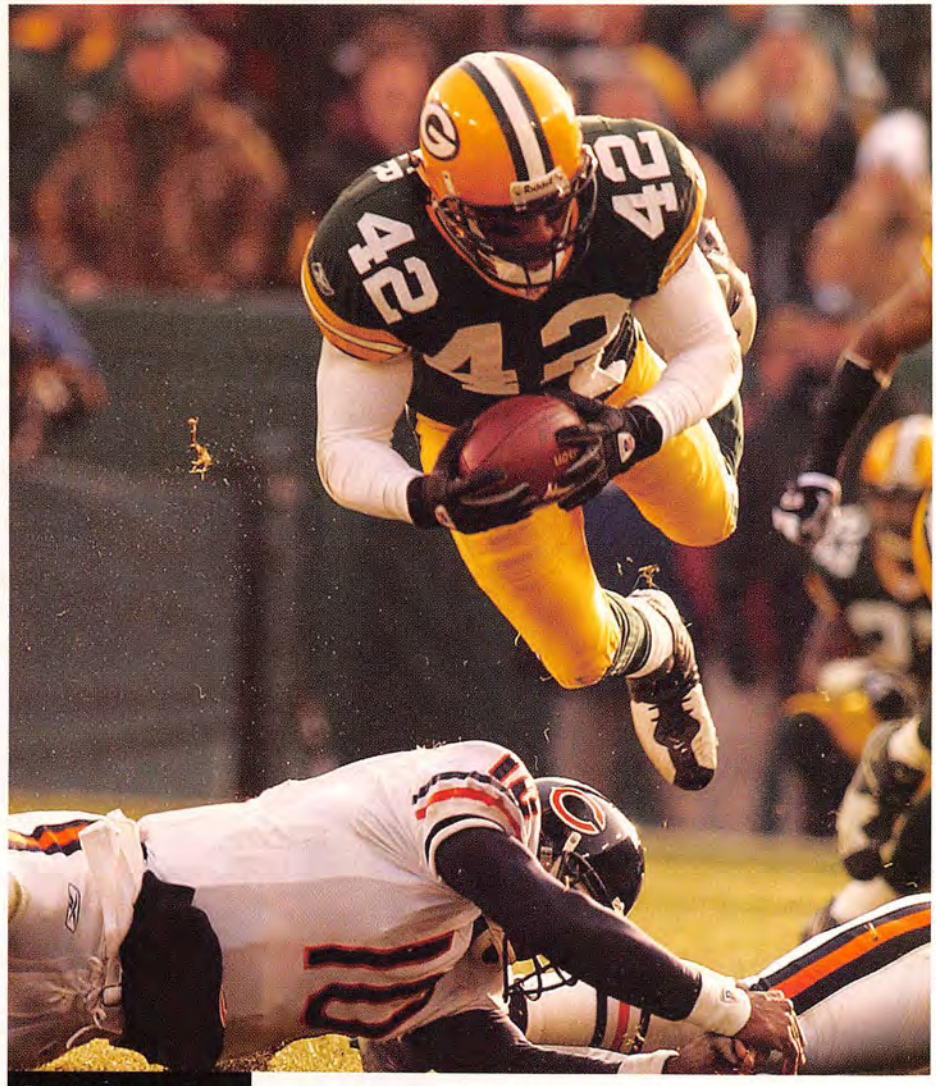
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Favre	471	308	3361	32	21
Pederson	2	2	16	0	0
Packers	**473**	**310**	**3377**	**32**	**21**
Opponents	**589**	**326**	**3600**	**18**	**21**

SACKS

Gbaja-Biamila 10.0, G. Jackson LG 6.0, G. Jackson 2.5, Hunt 4.0, Nwokorie 2.5, Barnett 2.0, Kampman 2.0, Sharper 2.0, Jue 1.5, Smith 1.5, Diggs 1.0, Edwards 1.0, Hawthorne LG 1.0, Hawthorne TM 1.0, Marshall 1.0, Navies 1.0

Packers 34.0, Opponents 19.0

t=touchdown



Darren Sharper, S

MORRY GASH/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Adding Cincinnati safety Mark Roman allows Slowik to utilize Darren Sharper more as a ball hawk from his free-safety spot. Sharper's five interceptions led the team but represented a four-year low for him. Roman replaces Marques Anderson and departed Antuan Edwards.

Michael Hawthorne, Bhawoh Jue, free-agent acquisition Chris Watson and younger candidates must step up in the nickel spots in order for Slowik to be comfortable the next time there's a fourth-and-26.

Special teams

Grade: B-

Sherman traded up to land punter B.J. Sander after losing Josh Bidwell to Tampa Bay. Sherman said he spent two picks on Sander because he was unhappy with field position. Ryan Longwell was the most accurate outdoor kicker in the league last season.

Davenport is adequate on kickoff returns, and the Packers hope Ford can handle punt returns. Ferguson led the team in special-teams tackles last season. The Packers would rather see him catching passes.

Management

Grade: B

Sherman's record of winning more than 40 games (43) in his first four seasons is unparalleled in Packer history. Yet until he gets to a Super Bowl, his tenure will be incomplete. Unable so far to make a free-agent-signing splash such as Reggie White, GM Sherman must hope that young talent develops around Favre before his meal ticket excuses himself from the table.

Bottom line

The North Division remains the NFC's weak sister, as Detroit and Chicago struggle for respectability. This makes life easier for the Packers. Until they find a spark equal to Favre on one side of the ball or the other, such as a White on defense or a Desmond Howard on special teams, they will fall short of the prize, and allow Minnesota to move ahead of them for the division title.

Mike Sherman, head coach

Larry Beightol, offensive line; **Darrell Bevell**, quarterbacks; **James Campen**, asst. offensive line-quality control; **Bob Slowik**, defensive coord.; **Stan Drayton**, quality control special teams-offense; **Mark Duffner**, linebackers; **Jethro Franklin**, defensive line; **Brad Miller**, asst. defensive line; **Joe Philbin**, tight ends; **Tom Rossley**, off. coord.; **Ray Sherman**, wide receivers; **Lionel Washington**, asst. def. backs; **Johnny Roland**, running backs, **Kurt Schottenheimer**, def. backs

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Favre, Brett	QB	6-2	225	10-10-1969	13	Southern Mississippi
16	Nall, Craig	QB	6-3	230	4-21-1979	1	Northwestern State

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
71	Barry, Kevin	T	6-4	330	7-20-1979	2	Arizona
60	Broyles, James	G	6-4	312	5-18-1978	1	SMS
76	Clifton, Chad	T	6-5	330	6-26-1976	4	Tennessee
69	Curtin, Brennan	T	6-9	315	6-30-1980	0	Notre Dame
60	Davis, Rob	C	6-3	284	12-10-1968	8	Shippensburg
58	Flanagan, Mike	C	6-5	297	11-10-1973	6	UCLA
62	Rivera, Marco	G	6-4	310	4-26-1972	7	Penn State
67	Ruegamer, Grey	G	6-4	310	6-11-1976	4	Arizona State
65	Tauscher, Mark	T	6-4	320	6-17-1977	4	Wisconsin
68	Wahle, Mike	G	6-6	307	3-29-1977	6	Navy
79	White, Mitch	T	6-4	311	3-25-1978	0	Oregon State

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
44	Davenport, Najeh	RB	6-1	245	2-8-1979	2	Miami (FL)
40	Fisher, Tony	RB	6-1	222	10-12-1979	2	Notre Dame
30	Green, Ahman	RB	6-1	217	2-16-1977	6	Nebraska
33	Henderson, William	RB	6-1	249	2-19-1971	9	North Carolina
22	Luchey, Nick	RB	6-2	270	3-30-1977	5	Miami (FL)

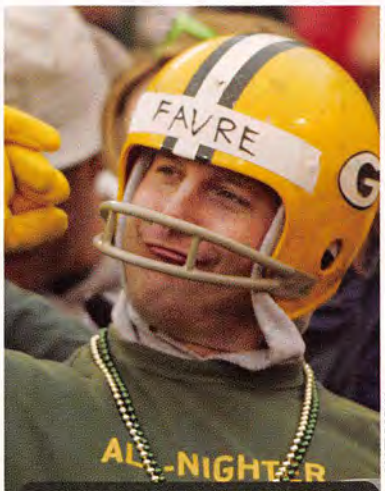
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
83	Chatman, Antonio	WR	5-9	177	2-12-1979	1	Cincinnati
19	Davis, Shockmain	WR	6-1	208	8-20-1977	1	Angelo State
80	Driver, Donald	WR	6-1	188	2-2-1975	5	Alcorn State
89	Ferguson, Robert	WR	6-1	209	12-17-1979	3	Texas A&M
86	Ford, Carl	WR	6-1	179	10-8-1980	0	Toledo
88	Franks, Bubba	TE	6-6	263	1-6-1978	4	Miami (FL)
87	Martin, David	TE	6-4	260	3-13-1979	3	Tennessee
15	Rice, Frank	WR	6-1	180	2-2-1978	0	Colorado State
84	Walker, Javon	WR	6-3	220	10-14-1978	2	Florida State

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
94	Gbaja-Biamila, Kabeer	DE	6-4	255	9-24-1977	4	San Diego State
97	Hunt, Cletidus	DT	6-4	305	1-2-1976	5	Kentucky State
75	Jackson, Grady	DT	6-2	330	1-21-1973	7	Knoxville
91	Johnson, Joe	DE	6-4	275	7-11-1972	9	Louisville
74	Kampman, Aaron	DE	6-4	286	11-30-1979	2	Iowa
64	Lee, James	DT	6-5	325	3-12-1980	0	Oregon State
90	Nwokorie, Chukie	DE	6-3	288	7-10-1975	5	Purdue
98	Peterson, Kenny	DT	6-3	300	11-21-1978	1	Ohio State
99	Reynolds, Jamal	DE	6-3	260	2-20-1979	3	Florida State
96	Smith, Larry	DT	6-5	310	12-4-1974	5	Florida State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
20	Anderson, Marques	S	5-11	212	5-26-1979	2	UCLA
45	Combs, Derek	CB	6-1	185	2-28-1979	2	Ohio State
29	Fuller, Curtis	S	5-11	191	7-25-1978	3	Texas Christian
31	Harris, Al	CB	6-1	185	12-7-1974	6	Texas A&M-Kingsville
27	Hawthorne, Michael	S	6-3	200	1-26-1977	4	Purdue
37	Johnson, Chris	CB	5-11	195	9-25-1979	0	Louisville
21	Jue, Bhawoh	CB	6-1	200	5-24-1979	3	Penn State
34	McKenzie, Mike	CB	6-1	194	4-26-1976	5	Memphis
20	Roman, Mark	S	5-11	200	3-26-1977	4	LSU
42	Sharper, Darren	S	6-2	210	11-3-1975	7	William & Mary
26	Swiney, Erwin	CB	6-1	192	10-8-1978	2	Nebraska
41	Watson, Chris	CB	6-1	188	6-30-1977	4	Eastern Illinois
32	Westbrook, Bryant	CB	6-1	205	12-19-1974	6	Texas
25	Whitley, James	CB	5-11	190	5-13-1979	2	Michigan

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
56	Barnett, Nick	LB	6-2	240	5-27-1981	1	Oregon State
59	Diggs, Na'il	LB	6-4	238	7-8-1978	4	Ohio State
54	Josue, Steve	LB	6-2	222	4-5-1980	0	Carson-Newman
53	Lenon, Paris	LB	6-2	240	11-26-1977	2	Richmond
51	Marshall, Torrance	LB	6-2	255	6-12-1977	3	Oklahoma
50	Navies, Hannibal	LB	6-3	247	7-19-1977	5	Colorado
59	Spearman, Armegis	LB	6-2	251	4-5-1978	3	Mississippi
55	Wilkins, Marcus	LB	6-2	235	1-2-1980	2	Texas

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
10	Dorsch, Travis	K	6-6	227	9-4-1979	1	Purdue
8	Longwell, Ryan	K	6-1	199	8-16-1974	7	California



SCOTT BOEHM

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Brett Favre
FB	William Henderson
RB	Ahman Green
LT	Chad Clifton
LG	Mike Wahle
C	Mike Flanagan
RG	Marco Rivera
RT	Mark Tauscher
TE	Bubba Franks
WR	Donald Driver
WR	Robert Ferguson

DEFENSE

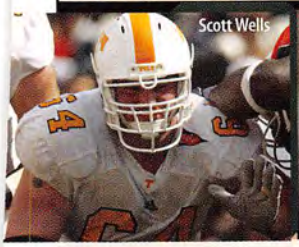
LE	Aaron Kampman
LT	Grady Jackson
RT	Cletidus Hunt
RE	Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila
LLB	Hannibal Navies
MLB	Nick Barnett
RLB	Na'il Diggs
LCB	Mike McKenzie
RCB	Al Harris
SS	Mark Roman
FS	Darren Sharper

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	B.J. Sander
K	Ryan Longwell
PR	Carl Ford
KR	Najeh Davenport

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

(L TO R): BOB LEVERONE/SPORTING NEWS/ICON SMI; JAMES D. SMITH/ICON SMI



2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	25	Carroll, Ahmad	CB	5-10	193	8-4-83	Arkansas
3	7	Thomas, Joey	CB	6-1	195	8-29-80	Montana State
3	9	Washington, Donnell	DT	6-5	323	2-6-81	Clemson
3	24	Sander, B.J.	P	6-3	222	1-5-80	Ohio State
6	14	Williams, Corey	DT	6-3	313	8-17-80	Arkansas State
7	50	Wells, Scott	C	6-1	300	1-7-81	Tennessee

WEEK 1	@ Carolina	
Sept. 13		9:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 2	vs. Chicago	
Sept. 19		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 3	@ Indianapolis	
Sept. 26		4:15
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 4	vs. New York Giants	
Oct. 3		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 5	vs. Tennessee	
Oct. 11		9:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 6	@ Detroit	
Oct. 17		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 7	vs. Dallas	
Oct. 24		4:15
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 8	@ Washington	
Oct. 31		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 9	OPEN DATE	
WEEK 10	vs. Minnesota	
Nov. 14		4:15
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 11	@ Houston	
Nov. 21		8:30
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 12	vs. St. Louis	
Nov. 29		9:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 13	@ Philadelphia	
Dec. 5		4:15
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 14	vs. Detroit	
Dec. 12		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 15	vs. Jacksonville	
Dec. 19		1:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 16	@ Minnesota	
Dec. 24		3:00
W/L	Score:	
WEEK 17	@ Chicago	
Jan. 2		1:00
W/L	Score:	

All times Eastern

CHICAGO BEARS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 3 2003 RECORD: 7-9

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Thomas Jones, RB** (TB)
- **Jonathan Quinn, QB** (KC)
- **John Tait, OT** (KC)
- **Bryan Johnson, FB** (trade, WAS)
- **Michael Keathley, OG** (SD)
- **Jack Golden, LB** (TB)
- **Ruben Brown, OG** (BUF)

STADIUM FACTS

Soldier Field

Capacity: **61,500** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **847-615-2327**
Web site: **www.chicagobears.com**

Avg. Attendance **61,603**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **100.2**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$65.00**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$20.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.00 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.50 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Over the past 10 years, the Bears have beaten arch-rival Green Bay two times in 20 tries, with both of those victories coming at Lambeau Field.

STAT: Including the playoffs, Chicago has scored a touchdown on its opening drive just three times in the team's last 56 games.

LOOK IT UP: Last season, the Bears became the first franchise in league history to earn 650 overall victories (postseason included) with a win over the Lions on Oct. 26.

THE COUNT:
0-6 – Bears' road record vs. the NFC North over the last two seasons.
80-10 – Combined scores of Chicago's first and last games in 2003 (both losses).
18.0 – Sacks by Bears' defense in 2003, 0.5 fewer than NFL leader Michael Strahan.

'Fat guys' won't be getting much Lovie from new papa Bear

The Chicago defense is set for a new attack mode under Smith

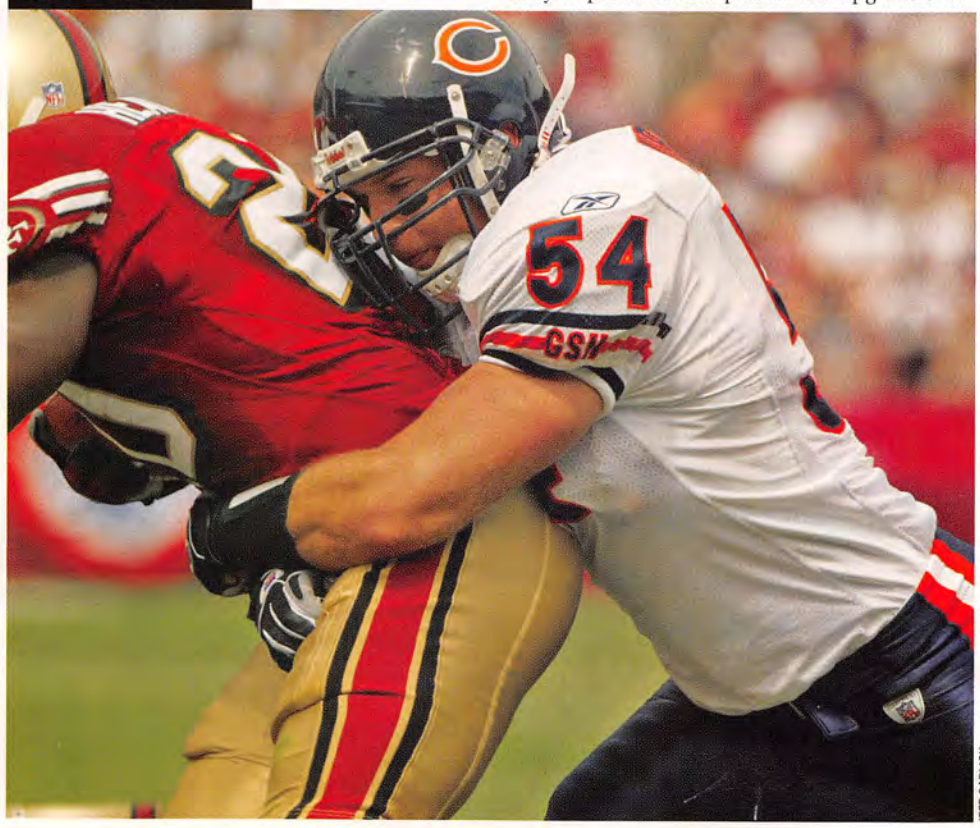
New coach Lovie Smith wants a leaner, quicker team than the Bears fielded under predecessor Dick Jauron. Smith even asked All-Pro middle linebacker Brian Urlacher to lose weight.

Urlacher is already as fast as they come at his position, yet he recorded zero interceptions, forced fumbles or fumbles recovered last season. With Smith as their defensive coordinator last year, the Rams led the league in takeaways, so expectations are clear.

The Bears also finished last in the league in sacks with 18, which is why quick defensive tackles Tommie Harris and Terry Johnson were drafted one-two.

Changes on offense are even more essential. The Bears finished 28th in offense, 30th in passing, and are relying on young quarterback Rex Grossman to turn it around.

Brian Urlacher, LB



JEFF CARLICK

Offensive line — Grade: B-

Unable to find a veteran left tackle in free agency to protect Grossman's backside, the Bears pried right tackle John Tait from Kansas City, paying him left-tackle money as insurance. A former left tackle, Tait could move if virtually untested Qasim Mitchell or holdover Mike Gandy don't pan out.

The return of guard Rex Tucker from injury will help the left side. Olin Kreutz is a Pro Bowl center and Ruben Brown, an eight-time Pro Bowler, was signed from Buffalo to replace departed Chris Villarrial. There is depth with 16-game starting right tackle Aaron Gibson, 16-game starting guard Steve Edwards and third-year guard Terrence Metcalf. The Bears keep hoping for a recovery from knee surgery by 2002 top draft choice Marc Colombo.

Quarterbacks — Grade: C

Grossman started the last three games of his rookie season, but finished only two after breaking a finger. The Bears beat the Vikings and Redskins with Grossman, but he completed only 52 percent of his passes. The upgrade over

failed experiment Kordell Stewart and veteran Chris Chandler was obvious, however.

To back up Grossman, the Bears signed Kansas City backup Jonathan Quinn, who is familiar with the offense being installed by new coordinator Terry Shea, also formerly of the Chiefs. It is similar to the Rams' offense, so the Bears promised to investigate Kurt Warner if he became available. Fifth-round pick Craig Krenzel is another candidate for third quarterback.

Running backs

Grade: B-

Dissatisfied with the potential and production of Anthony Thomas—a 1,000-yard rusher but not a gamebreaker—the Bears are taking a chance on free agent Thomas Jones, who showed flashes with Tampa Bay at the end of last season after failing as a No. 1 draft choice in Arizona. They think the faster and shiftier Jones can provide a reasonable facsimile of the contributions to this offense that Marshall Faulk and Priest Holmes make in St. Louis and Kansas City, respectively.

Adding fullback Bryan Johnson from Washington in a trade indicates the Bears have plans to incorporate him as a receiver as well as blocker. Adrian Peterson, Rabih Abdullah and Brock Forsey are backups.

Receivers

Grade: C+

Top receiver Marty Booker's production was cut in half during the Stewart year, but he remains the team's most reliable option. No. 2 receiver Dez White signed in Atlanta without resistance, leaving unproven Justin Gage and Bobby Wade behind. The Bears appear to have given up on former No. 1 draft choice David Terrell, so fast third-rounder Bernard Berrian of Fresno State will get a look.

Tight end Desmond Clark is coming off a 44-catch year and will be rejoined by Dustin Lyman off injured reserve. In Kansas City, Shea obviously used tight end Tony Gonzalez to Clark's liking.

Defensive line

Grade: C+

Smith and new defensive coordinator Ron Rivera are looking for a double-digit sacker and don't know if they have one in young defensive ends Michael Haynes and Alex Brown. Second-year man Haynes is replacing departed Phillip Daniels at left end. Brown led the team with 5.5 sacks. Fifth-rounder Claude Harriott offers more quickness.

After allowing big tackles Ted Washington and Keith Traylor to go to New England in the last two years, the Bears are bringing in a smaller, faster dimension with rookies Harris and Johnson. Holdovers Alfonso Boone and Bryan Robinson and second-year prospects Ian Scott and Tron LaFavor will have to change their style to make the team. Smith's rallying cry is "no fat guys." Joe Tafoya backs up at end.

Linebackers

Grade: B-

Accustomed to throwing young linebackers into the fray in St. Louis, Smith is hoping he can get similar production from outside starters Lance Briggs and Joe Odom flanking Urlacher. If Odom or Bryan Knight or rookie Leon Joe can't replace departed Warrick Holdman, Smith will look at free agency.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	273.8	28
Rushing	110.2	18
Passing	163.6	30
Scoring	283	23T
Punt Returns	11.8	7
Kick Returns	23.8	3
Red Zone TD %	48.9	16
Total Defense	309.2	14
Against Rush	116.6	16
Against Pass	192.6	13
Points Allowed	346	22
Interceptions	15	14T
Sacks	18	32
Turnover Diff.	-9	27

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
264	104	143	17

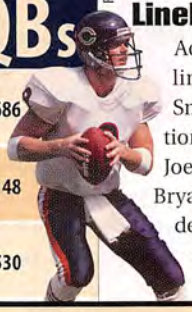
RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
45	198	22	14

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
13	12	4	1

BEARS' BEST-EVER QBs



FINALSHOT/JRP

1. **SID LUCKMAN**
   Career Passing Yards: **14,686**
   Career TD Passes: **137**
2. **JIM MCMAHON**
   Career Passing Yards: **18,148**
   Career TD Passes: **100**
3. **BILL WADE**
   Career Passing Yards: **18,530**
   Career TD Passes: **124**

New head Bear Lovie Smith expects his coordinators to be difference-makers

The Bears will have a new look next season. It isn't even the look they were planning on when the offseason began. But new coach Lovie Smith promises it will be aggressive and exciting.

Chicago's head-coaching search initially focused on college coaches, including LSU's Nick Saban, Maryland's Ralph Friedgen, Iowa's Kirk Ferentz and California's Jeff Tedford. When those coaches decided to stay put, the team went a different route, hiring Smith, the St. Louis Rams' defensive coordinator.

Smith then went and hired new offensive and defensive coordinators, Terry Shea and Ron Rivera, respectively, who have one thing in common: They promise an emphasis on speed and aggression.

"We're going to establish a different system where we're attacking on both ends of the football," Smith says. "We want a fast team in every phase of the game."

While Smith is a defensive expert, he chose Shea because he always knew he'd want an offense with "lots of shifts and motions and big-play ability," he says, adding that he wants three receivers with enough speed for what he calls the "make-a-difference plays."

Shea, who was the Chiefs' quarterbacks coach, says the Bears too often got stuck in third-and-long situations last season. To avoid that, he says he'll pass on 60 percent of first downs and expect 60 percent completions while mixing in plenty of traps and draws. He is ambitious enough to state that being forced to punt is the equivalent of a turnover.

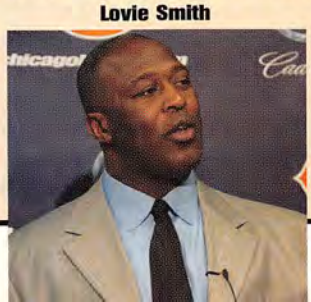
Rivera is a former Bear linebacker, which Smith calls "an added bonus" in a town steeped in tradition, but says he chose the former linebacker because of his aggressive work in Philadelphia. Rivera has already disinherited predecessor Greg Blache's approach that didn't emphasize sacks.

Smith says Rivera blitzes more than he did with the Rams but, while he believes in his own system, "I think we can merge the two and incorporate them together."

The challenge for the Bears, of course, is to see if the players can adjust. Smith knows while younger players are more flexible, some veterans get "set in the their ways." However, he says "if they see it's being done well, they'll accept the changes. As a new head coach, I just have to trust the lessons I've learned along the way."

—Stuart Miller

Lovie Smith



JEFF ROBERSON/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 7, Lost 9

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	49-7	at San Francisco
09/14	L	24-13	at Minnesota
09/29	L	38-23	Green Bay
10/05	W	24-21	Oakland
10/12	L	20-13	at New Orleans
10/19	L	24-17	at Seattle
10/26	W	24-16	Detroit
11/02	W	20-7	San Diego
11/09	L	12-10	at Detroit
11/16	L	23-21	St. Louis
11/23	W	19-10	at Denver
11/30	W	28-3	Arizona
12/07	L	34-21	at Green Bay
12/14	W	13-10	Minnesota
12/21	W	27-24	Washington
12/28	L	31-3	at Kansas City

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Thomas	244	1024	4.2	67t	6
Stewart	59	290	4.9	25	3
Forsey	50	191	3.8	17	2
Pritchett	21	93	4.4	18	2
Peterson	22	70	3.2	10	0
Abdullah	18	37	2.1	10	0
Chandler	14	35	2.5	11	0
Wade	5	14	2.8	6	0
White	2	13	6.5	12	0
Terrell	1	4	4.0	4	0
Maynard	1	0	0.0	0	0
Grossman	3	-1	-0.3	0	0
Bears	**443**	**1763**	**4.0**	**67t**	**13**
Opponents	**449**	**1865**	**4.2**	**60t**	**13**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Booker	52	715	13.8	61t	4
White	49	583	11.9	49	3
Clark	44	433	9.8	31	2
Terrell	43	361	8.4	35	1
Pritchett	18	83	4.6	20	0
Gage	17	338	19.9	57	2
Wade	12	137	11.4	24	0
Lyman	11	80	7.3	12	0
Thomas	9	36	4.0	9	0
Abdullah	8	55	6.9	17	0
Merritt	3	50	16.7	25	0
Forsey	3	37	12.3	22	0
Peterson	1	5	5.0	5	0
Bears	**271**	**2905**	**10.7**	**61t**	**12**
Opponents	**326**	**3187**	**9.8**	**51**	**20**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Stewart	251	126	1418	7	12
Chandler	192	107	1050	3	7
Grossman	72	38	437	2	1
Bears	**515**	**271**	**2905**	**12**	**20**
Opponents	**525**	**326**	**3187**	**20**	**15**

SACKS

A. Brown 5.5, Daniels 2.5, Urlacher 2.5, Haynes 2.0, Azumah 1.0, Boone 1.0, Gray 1.0, Robinson 1.0, Tillman 1.0, Green 0.5

Bears 18.0, Opponents 43.0

t=touchdown

Charles Tillman, CB

TOP TO BOTTOM: TODD ROSENBERG/ICON SMI; MIKE ALLEN

In Smith's schemes, the linebackers are everywhere. Spoiled by coaching the great Derrick Brooks in Tampa, Smith will demand a lot and Urlacher could flourish.

Secondary

Grade: B-

The fast development of rookie Charles Tillman at cornerback last season was a pleasant surprise. The Bears are hoping either Jerry Azumah or R.W. McQuarters can keep a job at right cornerback and that Todd McMillon or rookie Nathan Vasher can be effective backups.

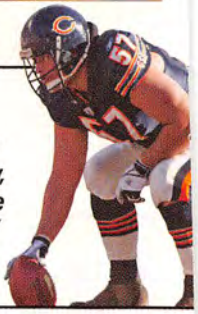
At safety, Bobby Gray will try to keep his job at strong safety ahead of Mike Green, who is returning from injury. Free safety Mike Brown remains the quarterback of the defense. Cameron Worrell and Todd Johnson will vie for reserve roles.

Special teams

Grade: A-

Azumah led the league in kickoff returns with a 29-yard average, including two touchdowns. McQuarters ranked among league leaders in punt returns, so the Bears have a nice one-two punch. Placekicker Paul Edinger is coming off his worst season after making only 26 of 36 attempts, but his ability in Chicago's notorious wind is appreciated. Punter Brad Maynard also returns, but may face a challenge from Brooks Barnard.

He said it:



"Just to be part of the Chicago Bears tradition has always been an honor for me . . . Courage, loyalty, teamwork—that's what the offensive line is all about."

—Bears center Olin Kreutz

Management

Grade: B-

For the first time in years, the Bears have their organizational structure in order with a president, Ted Phillips, who hired the general manager, Jerry Angelo, who hired the coach, Smith. Such a chain of command should prevent head-swiveling and limit excuses.

Bottom line

Smith points to Carolina as a team that used a 7-9 season to catapult into the Super Bowl. That seems a stretch for Chicago, where there is still too much youth and uncertainty in too many places for a first-year coaching staff teaching new offensive and defensive systems to overcome.

FINAL GRADE **85**

BEARS ROSTER

Lovie Smith, head coach

Ron Rivera, defensive coord.; **Charlie Coiner,** asst. special teams; **Terry Shea,** offensive coordinator; **Dave Toub,** special teams coord.; **Wade Wilson,** quarterbacks; **Bob Babich,** linebackers; **Darryl Drake,** offensive line; **Pete Hoener,** offensive line; **Harold Goodwin,** asst. offensive line; **Rob Boras,** tight ends; **Tim Spencer,** running backs; **Karl Dunbar,** defensive line; **Vance Bedford,** def. backs; **Torrian Gray,** asst. def. backs; **Mike Bajakian,** off. quality control; **Lloyd Lee,** def. quality control

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
8	Grossman, Rex	QB	6-1	222	8-23-1980	1	Florida
12	Quinn, Jonathan	QB	6-6	240	2-27-1975	5	Middle Tennessee State
#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
68	Anderson, Bryan	G	6-4	325	3-30-1980	0	Pittsburgh
79	Brown, Ruben	G	6-3	300	2-13-1972	9	Pittsburgh
75	Colombo, Marc	T	6-8	325	10-8-1978	1	Boston College
79	Edwards, Steve	T	6-5	340	2-20-1979	2	UCF
69	Gandy, Mike	T	6-4	325	1-3-1979	2	Notre Dame
78	Gibson, Aaron	G	6-6	375	9-27-1977	4	Wisconsin
61	Keathley, Michael	G	6-4	296	3-9-1978	3	Texas Christian
57	Kreutz, Olin	C	6-2	292	6-9-1977	6	Washington
65	Mannelly, Patrick	T	6-5	265	4-18-1975	6	Duke
60	Metcalf, Terrence	G	6-3	325	1-28-1978	2	Mississippi
72	Mitchell, Qasim	G	6-6	355	12-3-1979	1	North Carolina A&T
76	Tait, John	T	6-6	323	1-26-1975	5	Brigham Young
64	Tucker, Rex	G	6-5	320	12-20-1976	4	Texas A&M
67	Warner, Josh	C	6-5	320	5-15-1979	1	SUNY-Brockport
#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
27	Abdullah, Rabih	RB	6-1	220	4-27-1975	5	Lehigh
44	Forsey, Brock	RB	5-11	203	2-11-1980	1	Boise State
28	Hicks, Dwone	RB	5-10	222	4-25-1981	1	Middle Tennessee State
47	Johnson, Bryan	RB	6-1	245	1-18-1978	4	Boise State
22	Jones, Thomas	RB	5-10	220	8-19-1978	4	Virginia
37	McKie, Jason	RB	5-11	231	5-22-1980	2	Temple
29	Peterson, Adrian	RB	5-10	210	7-1-1979	2	Georgia Southern
36	Pritchett, Stanley	RB	6-2	250	12-22-1973	8	South Carolina
35	Thomas, Anthony	RB	6-2	228	11-7-1977	3	Michigan
#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
49	Anelli, Mark	TE	6-3	265	6-5-1979	1	Wisconsin
86	Booker, Marty	WR	6-1	212	7-31-1976	5	Louisiana-Monroe
88	Clark, Desmond	TE	6-3	255	4-20-1977	5	Wake Forest
10	Elliott, Jamin	WR	6-1	187	10-5-1979	1	Delaware
87	Gage, Justin	WR	6-4	208	1-25-1981	1	Missouri
85	Gilmore, John	TE	6-4	260	9-21-1979	2	Penn State
82	Johnson, Robert	TE	6-6	270	6-20-1980	1	Auburn
18	Jones, Daryl	WR	5-9	190	2-2-1979	1	Miami (FL)
89	Lyman, Dustin	TE	6-4	245	8-5-1976	4	Wake Forest
81	Merritt, Ahmad	WR	5-10	195	2-5-1977	3	Wisconsin
48	Reid, Gabe	TE	6-4	260	5-28-1977	1	Brigham Young
83	Terrell, David	WR	6-3	215	3-13-1979	3	Michigan
84	Wade, Bobby	WR	5-10	193	2-25-1981	1	Arizona
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
70	Boone, Alfonso	DT	6-4	328	1-11-1976	3	Mount San Antonio JC
96	Brown, Alex	DE	6-3	272	6-4-1979	2	Florida
97	Haynes, Michael	DE	6-3	281	9-13-1980	1	Penn State
74	Hill, Charles	DT	6-2	293	11-1-1980	1	Maryland
73	LaFavor, Tron	DT	6-2	290	11-27-1979	1	Florida
98	Robinson, Bryan	DT	6-4	305	6-22-1974	7	Fresno State
95	Scott, Ian	DT	6-2	315	11-8-1981	1	Florida
99	Tafoya, Joe	DE	6-4	278	9-6-1978	3	Arizona
#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
23	Azumah, Jerry	CB	5-10	195	9-1-1977	5	New Hampshire
30	Brown, Mike	S	5-10	212	2-13-1978	4	Nebraska
25	Gray, Bobby	S	6-1	212	4-30-1978	2	Louisiana Tech
43	Green, Mike	S	6-1	195	12-6-1976	4	Northwestern State
32	Johnson, Todd	S	6-1	200	12-18-1978	0	Florida
26	McMillon, Todd	CB	5-11	188	9-26-1974	4	Northern Arizona
21	McQuarters, R.W.	CB	5-10	198	12-21-1976	6	Oklahoma State
33	Tillman, Charles	CB	6-1	196	2-23-1981	1	Louisiana-Lafayette
22	Williams, Brock	CB	5-10	195	8-11-1979	1	Notre Dame
24	Worrell, Cameron	S	5-11	199	12-14-1979	1	Fresno State
#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
55	Briggs, Lance	LB	6-1	245	11-12-1980	1	Arizona
58	Golden, Jack	LB	6-1	240	1-28-1977	4	Oklahoma State
92	Hillenmeyer, Hunter	LB	6-4	238	10-28-1980	1	Vanderbilt
90	Knight, Bryan	LB	6-2	238	1-22-1979	2	Pittsburgh
59	Odom, Joe	LB	6-1	238	12-14-1979	1	Purdue
54	Urlacher, Brian	LB	6-4	258	5-25-1978	4	New Mexico
#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
16	Barnard, Brooks	P	6-2	188	11-4-1979	1	Maryland
2	Edinger, Paul	K	5-8	175	1-17-1978	4	Michigan State
4	Maynard, Brad	P	6-1	186	2-9-1974	7	Ball State

JEFF ROBERSON/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Rex Grossman
FB	Bryan Johnson
RB	Thomas Jones
LT	Qasim Mitchell
LG	Rex Tucker
C	Olin Kreutz
RG	Ruben Brown
RT	John Tait
TE	Desmond Clark
WR	Justin Gage
WR	Marty Booker

DEFENSE

LE	Michael Haynes
LT	Terry Johnson
RT	Tommie Harris
RE	Alex Brown
LLB	Lance Briggs
MLB	Brian Urlacher
RLB	Joe Odom
LCB	Charles Tillman
RCB	Jerry Azumah
SS	Bobby Gray
FS	Mike Brown

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Brad Maynard
K	Paul Edinger
PR	R.W. McQuarters
KR	Jerry Azumah

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Detroit	
Sept. 12	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 2 @ Green Bay	
Sept. 19	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 3 @ Minnesota	
Sept. 26	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 4 vs. Philadelphia	
Oct. 3	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 5 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 6 vs. Washington	
Oct. 17	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 7 @ Tampa Bay	
Oct. 24	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 8 vs. San Francisco	
Oct. 31	8:30
Score:	
WEEK 9 @ New York Giants	
Nov. 7	4:05
Score:	
WEEK 10 @ Tennessee	
Nov. 14	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 11 vs. Indianapolis	
Nov. 21	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 12 @ Dallas	
Nov. 25	4:15
Score:	
WEEK 13 vs. Minnesota	
Dec. 5	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 14 @ Jacksonville	
Dec. 12	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 15 vs. Houston	
Dec. 19	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 16 @ Detroit	
Dec. 26	1:00
Score:	
WEEK 17 vs. Green Bay	
Jan. 2	1:00
Score:	

All times Eastern

AFC EAST | AFC NORTH | AFC SOUTH | AFC WEST | NFC EAST | NFC NORTH | NFC SOUTH | NFC WEST

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	14	Harris, Tommie	DT	6-2	289	10-29-83	Oklahoma
2	15	Johnson, Terry	DT	6-2	283	12-7-81	Washington
3	15	Berrian, Bernard	WR	6-1	183	12-27-80	Fresno State
4	14	Vasher, Nathan	CB	5-10	177	11-17-81	Texas
4	16	Joe, Leon	LB	5-11	232	10-26-81	Maryland
5	15	Harriott, Claude	DE	6-3	271	4-8-81	Pittsburgh
5	16	Krenzel, Craig	QB	6-3	227	7-1-81	Ohio State
7	14	Marshall, Alfonso	CB	6-1	183	1-17-81	Miami (FL)

DETROIT LIONS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 4 2003 RECORD: 5-11

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Fernando Bryant, CB** (JAX)
- **David Loverne, G** (STL)
- **Dainon Sidney, CB** (BUF)
- **Tai Streets, WR** (SF)
- **Damien Woody, G** (NE)
- **Brock Marion, FS** (MIA)
- **Rick Mirer, QB** (OAK)

STADIUM FACTS

Ford Field

Capacity: **65,000** Turf: **Artificial**
Tickets: **313-262-2003**
Web site: **www.detroitlions.com**

Avg. Attendance **61,305**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **95.0**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$53.91**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$4.50 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.75 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

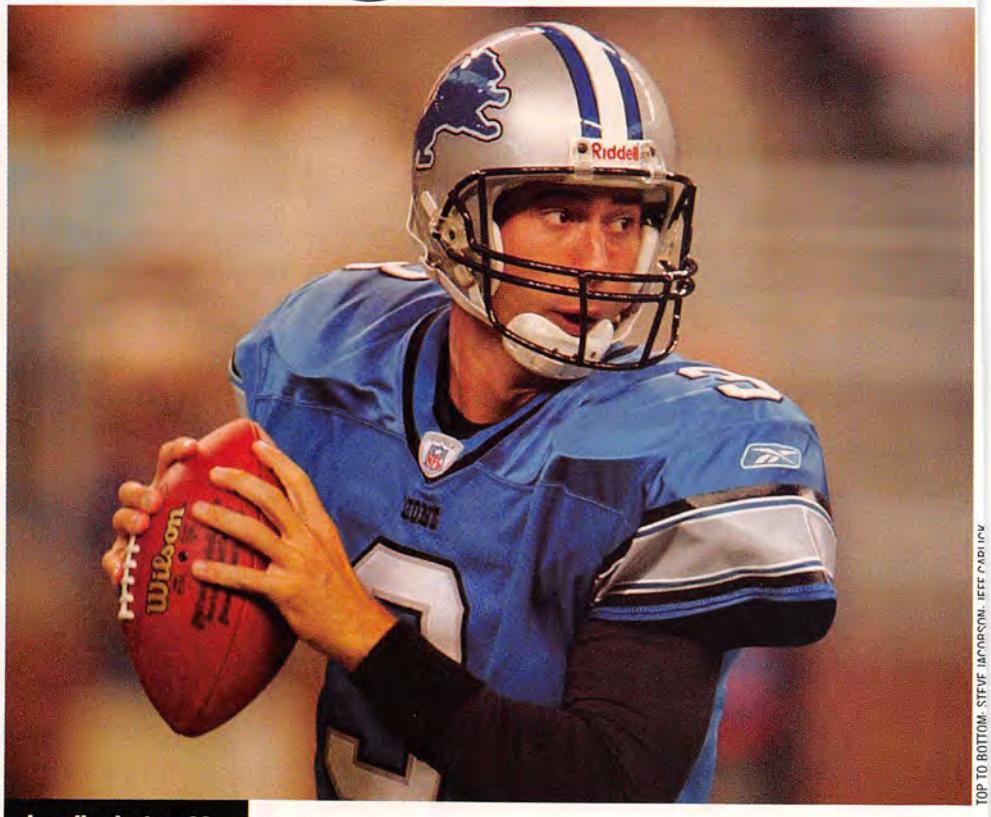
QUICK HITS

FACT: The Lions' first Thanksgiving Day game was in 1934 against the Chicago Bears, and Detroit has played on Thanksgiving Day every year since with the exception of 1939-44.

STAT: Over the past three seasons, the Lions are 1-4 when a Detroit rusher posts a 100-yard game.

LOOK IT UP: Since winning its fourth NFL championship in 1957, Detroit's only postseason victory has come against Dallas in the 1991 divisional playoffs.

THE COUNT:
4 – Fumbles lost by the Lions in 2003, fewest in the NFL.
4-4 – Kicker Jason Hanson's perfect mark from 50+ yards last season.
710 – Combined weight (lbs.) of starting DTs Shaun Rogers and Dan Wilkinson.



Joey Harrington, QB

TOP TO BOTTOM: STEVE JACKSON; JEFF CADIZ

Draft haul should give Lions weapons to end road losing streak and gain some respectability

Joey Harrington gets some much-needed offensive help

The Lions have won only 10 games in three years. For ineptitude, nobody's close. They won two games, then three, then five, so at least they are going in the right direction.

Coach Steve Mariucci's first order of business is to stop breaking one very important NFL record. They have lost 24 straight road games and start this season at Chicago hoping to snap the unhappy streak.

They finished last season strong by knocking the St. Louis Rams from home-field advantage in the playoffs and expect to build on it after a significant draft haul that included instant offense in receiver Roy Williams and running back Kevin Jones in the first round.

"We're younger and we're faster," Mariucci says.

Offensive line — Grade: B-

Adding left guard Damien Woody from the Patriots in free agency to pair with solid left tackle Jeff Backus is the first step toward raising the Lions from their 32nd spot in rushing and total offense.

Woody can also play center, but the Lions hope for improvement from Dominic Raiola and right tackle Stockar McDougle. Right guard remains a problem.

They added guard David Loverne from St. Louis as insurance more than as a starter. Matt Joyce and Josh Lovelady are among the reserves. Kelly Butler is an intriguing rookie prospect at tackle.

He said it:

"We're going to help Joey and surround him with a better supporting cast. We've done some of that already today."
—Steve Mariucci on draft day

Quarterbacks

Grade: C

Joey Harrington had the lowest passer-efficiency rating among all quarterbacks who started 16 games. He completed only 56 percent of his passes and threw more interceptions than touchdown passes. Yet he remains the future and doesn't appear to have lost confidence. He was sacked a league-low 11 times because he unloads the ball, so he hasn't been taking a physical beating.

"I'm going to feel a lot better about Joey when we give him some more help," Mariucci says. "It was very hard for us to even evaluate him last year. His passing game was constantly interchangeable parts, and we didn't have a running game."

In Williams and Jones, those problems are supposed to be solved, which puts the pressure on Harrington. Young Mike McMahon and journeyman Rick Mirer are the backups.

Running backs

Grade: C+

The Lions were awful, averaging only 83 yards a game on the ground and never finding a dependable go-to guy among Shawn Bryson, Olandis Gary or Artose Pinner. Jones unexpectedly fell to the bottom of the first round, but isn't afraid to admit he thinks he's another Barry Sanders. Half a Sanders would be fine with Detroit. Jones should be careful about throwing around names.

Pinner was never fully healthy as a rookie who came into the league recovering from a broken leg. The Lions have high hopes for him and expect him to battle Jones for the starting job. The presence of outstanding blocker and receiver Cory Schlesinger at fullback is welcome.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	266.4	32
Rushing	83.6	32
Passing	182.8	24
Scoring	270	26T
Punt Returns	12.3	4
Kick Returns	22.6	8
Red Zone TD %	47.4	20
Total Defense	335.0	24
Against Rush	111.4	15
Against Pass	223.6	28
Points Allowed	379	25T
Interceptions	15	14T
Sacks	28	27
Turnover Diff.	0	14T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
250	69	152	29

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
38	160	18	11

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
5	17	7	4

LIONS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **BOBBY LAYNE**
   Career Passing Yards: **26,768**
   Career TD Passes: **196**
2. **GREG LANDRY**
   Career Passing Yards: **16,052**
   Career TD Passes: **98**
3. **TOBIN ROTE**
   Career Passing Yards: **18,850**
   Career TD Passes: **148**

BETTMANN/CORBIS

Receivers

Grade: B

Last year's top draft pick Charles Rogers got hurt in preseason and was never healthy, catching only 22 passes. After flashing with two touchdown catches on opening day, Rogers added only one more all season while nursing a broken collarbone.

With Williams, the Lions hope to field the most exciting pair of young receivers in the league. Their size and speed combined with stricter enforcement of the no-touch rule beyond five yards presents formidable possibilities.

Signing veteran Tai Streets from San Francisco plus the return of Scotty Anderson, Az-Zahir Hakim and promising David Kircus should give Mariucci all he needs. Casey FitzSimmons and Mikhael Ricks are the tight ends.

Defensive line

Grade: B+

New defensive coordinator Dick Jauron takes over a unit that finished 24th overall but did show some ability to stop the run. It starts up front, where tackles Shaun Rogers and an apparently rejuvenated Dan Wilkinson clogged the middle for 16 starts apiece. Right end James Hall also started 16, and ageless left end Robert Porcher held up for 14.

Pass-rushing specialist Kalimba Edwards got only two sacks as Hall and Porcher led the club with 4.5 apiece, so the Lions need better pressure. Young Cory Redding and Colin Cole and veterans Jared DeVries and Kelvin Pritchett are backups.

Embattled Millen quietly makes progress with early additions of Woody, Bryant

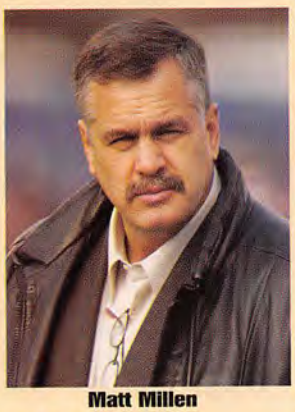
Sometimes context is everything.

Many teams upgraded their teams and excited their fans by acquiring star players (Terrell Owens) or new players at glamour positions (quarterbacks Jeff Garcia or A.J. Feeley). By contrast, the Detroit Lions spent a small fortune for an offensive lineman and a cornerback. Yet in the Motor City, those were considered among the best moves—even the most inspiring moves—of the offseason.

Signing guard-center Damien Woody ($9.5 million signing bonus on a six-year, $30 million contract) away from New England and cornerback Fernando Bryant ($7.25 million to sign a $24 million deal,also for six years) from Jacksonville won't make these perennial losers instant contenders, but the moves were first steps in the right direction.

For Lions President Matt Millen, it was simply a matter of finally having the cap room to implement his long-term strategy: signing long-term deals with players talented enough to have an impact but also young and healthy enough to be around when the team finally comes together. "We are not at a place where we need just one guy," he says.

But for the media and the public, the moves appeared symbolic. Finally, it seemed owner William Clay Ford, long criticized for stinginess, was making a very public and very expensive commitment and, for once, it seemed there was a real plan in place. The media also played up Millen's aggressiveness, reporting that he wouldn't let Woody leave town until the deal was done.



Matt Millen

"That was a little overplayed," Millen recalls, but he acknowledges that he believes "when you're close to closing a deal you don't let someone out the door."

Detroit Free Press columnist Drew Sharp wrote "the Lions took an important step in their quest to return to the glory days of 8-8," but he believes the signings—especially Woody's deal—were savvy and vital moves.

"They did overpay to keep [Woody] away from the Dolphins, but it was important—it brings them respectability," Sharp says. "Lion fans used to be happy just to have a player with a pulse. The Woody signing creates confidence in the front office."

—Stuart Miller

TODD ROSENBERG/ICON SMI

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 5, Lost 11

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	42-24	Arizona
09/14	L	31-6	at Green Bay
09/21	L	23-13	Minnesota
09/28	L	20-16	at Denver
10/05	L	24-17	at San Francisco
10/19	L	38-7	Dallas
10/26	L	24-16	at Chicago
11/02	W	23-13	Oakland
11/09	W	12-10	Chicago
11/16	L	35-14	at Seattle
11/23	L	24-14	at Minnesota
11/27	W	22-14	Green Bay
12/07	L	14-7	San Diego
12/14	L	45-17	at Kansas City
12/21	L	20-14	at Carolina
12/28	W	30-20	St. Louis

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Bryson	158	606	3.8	39	3
Gary	113	384	3.4	27	2
Pinner	39	99	2.5	12	0
Harrington	30	86	2.9	26	0
Hakim	3	51	17.0	35	0
McMahon	5	32	6.4	12	0
Cobourne	10	27	2.7	19	0
C. Rogers	2	17	8.5	12	0
Schlesinger	9	16	1.8	4	0
Swinton	3	11	3.7	9	0
P. Smith	2	5	2.5	3	0
Jefferson	1	3	3.0	3	0
Drummond	1	1	1.0	1	0
Lions	**376**	**1338**	**3.6**	**39**	**5**
Opponents	**447**	**1782**	**4.0**	**65t**	**14**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Bryson	54	340	6.3	26	0
Hakim	49	449	9.2	28	4
Ricks	37	434	11.7	38	2
Schroeder	36	397	11	26	2
Schlesinger	34	247	7.3	33t	2
Fitzsimmons	23	160	7.0	22	2
C. Rogers	22	243	11.0	33t	3
Anderson	17	325	19.1	72t	2
Gary	13	69	5.3	13	0
Swinton	9	100	11.1	25	0
Jefferson	6	46	7.7	13	0
P. Smith	5	45	9.0	12	0
Pinner	5	40	8.0	21	0
Cobourne	4	30	7.5	13	0
Kircus	3	53	17.7	19	0
Harrington	1	8	8.0	8	0
Trejo	1	2	2.0	2	0
Lions	**319**	**2988**	**9.4**	**72t**	**17**
Opponents	**331**	**3760**	**11.4**	**73t**	**26**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Harrington	554	309	2880	17	22
McMahon	31	9	87	0	2
Hakim	1	1	21	0	0
Lions	**588**	**319**	**2988**	**17**	**24**
Opponents	**522**	**331**	**3760**	**26**	**15**

SACKS

Hall 4.5, Porcher 4.5, S. Rogers 4.0, Green 3.0, Edwards 2.0, Holmes 2.0, Wilkinson 2.0, Bailey 1.5, O. Smith 1.5, Bly 1.0, DeVries 1.0, C. Harris 1.0

Lions 28.0, Opponents 11.0

t=touchdown

DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

Boss Bailey, LB

Linebackers

Grade: B-

With weakside starter Barrett Green going to the Giants, the arrival of second-round Butkus Award winner Teddy Lehman is welcome. The Lions expect improvement from strongside starter Boss Bailey, who was in on more than 100 tackles as a rookie. Bailey could use his speed on the weakside, but Lehman is fast as well. Veteran Earl Holmes held up in the middle. James Davis, Donte' Curry and rookie Alex Lewis are reserves.

Secondary

Grade: C

Adding veteran Brock Marion from Miami to start at free safety means Brian Walker will shift to strong safety and second-year man Terrence Holt will back up.

If signing free-agent cornerback Fernando Bryant from Jacksonville has a similar impact to last year's signing of Dre' Bly, the Lions will be ecstatic. Bly went to the Pro Bowl from a bad team. Young corners Chris Cash and Andre Goodman should return from injured reserve to lend depth along with rookie Keith Smith. Veteran Dainon Sidney also arrived from Buffalo.

Special teams

Grade: A

Nick Harris replaced injured punter John Jett, who plans to retire. Jason Hanson missed only one field goal all season to lead the NFC. The Lions take pride in their special teams, assigning two coaches to the task. Eddie Drummond and Reggie Swinton combined to make the Lions one of the best return teams in the league.

Management

Grade: C

President Matt Millen already is the beneficiary of the most supportive, generous and patient ownership in the NFL, the Ford family. But another sub-.500 year is liable to be bad news for a regime starting its fourth season. The salary-cap problems are over, so better results are expected. Still, a .500 season would be a considerable jump.

Bottom line

The Lions should be able to get well quicker in the NFC North than in most other divisions, because their rivals aren't as strong at the top as they are in the NFC East, South and West. If nothing else, the Lions plan to win a road game. They open in Chicago and would love to get off to a fast start.

FINAL GRADE **83**

LIONS

ROSTER

Steve Mariucci, head coach

Sherman Lewis, off. coord.; **Kevin Higgins**, wide receivers; **Sean Kugler**, asst. off. line/tight ends; **Patrick Morris**, off. line; **Greg Olson**, quarterbacks; **Tom Rathman**, running backs; **Andy Sugarman**, tight ends; **Kevin Lartigue**, asst. to the head coach; **Dick Jauron**, def. coord.; **Richard Smith**, asst. head coach/linebackers; **Larry Brooks**, def. line; **George Catavolos**, def. backs; **Don Clemons**, def. asst.; **Johnny Holland**, def. asst.; **Chuck Priefer**, special teams coord.; **Stan Kwan**, special teams asst.

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Harrington, Joey	QB	6-4	220	10-21-1978	2	Oregon
8	McMahon, Mike	QB	6-2	208	2-8-1979	3	Rutgers
3	Mirer, Rick	QB	6-3	210	3-19-1970	8	Notre Dame

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
76	Backus, Jeff	T	6-5	305	9-21-1977	3	Michigan
64	Hopson, Tyrone	G	6-2	290	5-28-1976	3	Eastern Kentucky
74	Johnson, Ben	T	6-6	329	4-7-1980	0	Wisconsin
75	Joyce, Matt	T	6-7	300	3-30-1972	9	Richmond
70	Lovelady, Josh	G	6-3	330	1-28-1978	2	Houston
61	Loverne, David	G	6-3	303	5-22-1976	4	San Jose State
73	McDougle, Stockar	T	6-6	335	1-11-1977	4	Oklahoma
	Noa, Kaulana	G	6-3	315	12-29-1976	0	Hawaii
51	Raiola, Dominic	C	6-1	295	12-30-1978	3	Nebraska
71	Rogers, Victor	T	6-6	331	11-10-1978	0	Colorado
65	Woody, Damien	C-G	6-3	320	11-3-1977	5	Boston College

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
24	Bryson, Shawn	RB	6-1	228	11-20-1976	4	Tennessee
31	Cobourne, Avon	RB	5-8	205	3-6-1979	1	West Virginia
33	Gary, Olandis	RB	5-11	218	5-18-1975	5	Georgia
21	Pinner, Artose	RB	5-10	229	1-5-1978	1	Kentucky
30	Schlesinger, Cory	RB	6-1	247	6-23-1972	9	Nebraska
40	Smith, Paul	RB	5-11	234	1-31-1978	4	UTEP
36	Trejo, Stephen	RB	6-2	254	11-20-1977	3	Arizona State

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
88	Anderson, Scotty	WR	6-2	191	11-24-1979	3	Grambling
89	Banta, Bradford	TE	6-6	253	12-14-1970	10	Southern California
18	Drummond, Eddie	WR	5-9	185	4-12-1980	2	Penn State
82	FitzSimmons, Casey	TE	6-3	250	10-10-1980	1	Carroll (MT)
82	Gaylor, Trevor	WR	6-3	195	11-3-1977	3	Miami (OH)
81	Hakim, Az-Zahir	WR	5-10	189	6-3-1977	6	San Diego State
11	Kircus, David	WR	6-1	185	2-19-1980	1	Grand Valley State
88	McCord, Quentin	WR	5-10	188	6-26-1978	3	Kentucky
83	Owens, John	TE	6-3	266	1-10-1980	2	Notre Dame
86	Ricks, Mikhael	TE	6-5	260	11-14-1974	6	Stephen F. Austin
80	Rogers, Charles	WR	6-2	202	5-23-1981	1	Michigan State
	Streets, Tai	WR	6-3	207	4-20-1977	5	Michigan
10	Swinton, Reggie	WR	6-1	186	7-24-1975	3	Murray State
16	Williams, James	WR	5-10	186	3-6-1978	4	Marshall

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
90	Cole, Colin	DT	6-2	299	6-24-1980	0	Iowa
95	DeVries, Jared	DE	6-4	272	6-11-1976	5	Iowa
98	Edwards, Kalimba	DE	6-5	264	12-26-1979	2	South Carolina
96	Hall, James	DE	6-2	270	2-4-1977	4	Michigan
91	Porcher, Robert	DE	6-3	266	7-30-1969	12	South Carolina State
93	Pritchett, Kelvin	DT	6-3	322	10-24-1969	13	Mississippi
78	Redding, Cory	DE	6-4	285	11-15-1980	1	Texas
92	Rogers, Shaun	DT	6-4	357	3-12-1979	3	Texas
72	Wilkinson, Dan	DT	6-4	353	3-13-1973	10	Ohio State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
26	Babers, Roderick	CB	5-9	190	10-6-1980	1	Texas
32	Bly, Dre'	CB	5-9	185	5-22-1977	5	North Carolina
25	Bryant, Fernando	CB	5-10	174	3-26-1977	5	Alabama
26	Cash, Chris	CB	5-11	170	7-13-1980	1	USC
44	Curry, Julius	CB	6-1	195	5-17-1979	1	Michigan
47	Drake, Charles	S	6-1	205	9-25-1981	0	Michigan
35	Goodman, Andre'	CB	5-10	185	8-11-1978	2	South Carolina
42	Holt, Terrence	S	6-2	208	3-5-1980	1	North Carolina State
	Marion, Brock	S	5-11	200	6-11-1970	11	Nevada
41	Myers, Leonard	CB	5-10	196	12-18-1978	3	Miami (FL)
26	Sanchez, Jeff	CB	5-10	175	1-21-1981	0	Tulane
37	Sidney, Dainon	CB	6-1	197	5-30-1975	6	UAB
28	Walker, Bracy	S	6-1	210	10-28-1970	10	North Carolina
45	Walker, Brian	S	6-1	205	5-31-1972	8	Washington State

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
97	Bailey, Boss	LB	6-3	233	10-14-1979	1	Georgia
55	Curry, Donte'	LB	6-1	233	7-22-1978	3	Morris Brown
52	Davis, James	LB	6-1	221	4-26-1979	1	West Virginia
50	Holmes, Earl	LB	6-2	242	4-28-1973	8	Florida A&M
57	Littleton, Jody	LB	6-1	235	10-23-1974	2	Baylor
58	Rainer, Wali	LB	6-2	247	4-19-1977	5	Virginia

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Hanson, Jason	K	5-11	182	6-17-1970	12	Washington State
2	Harris, Nick	P	6-2	218	7-23-1978	3	California

(L TO R): PAUL SANCYA/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS(2); TOMASSO DEROSA

SCOTT BOEHM

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Joey Harrington
FB	Cory Schlesinger
RB	Artose Pinner
LT	Jeff Backus
LG	Damien Woody
C	Dominic Raiola
RG	David Loverne
RT	Stockar McDougle
TE	Casey FitzSimmons
WR	Charles Rogers
WR	Roy Williams

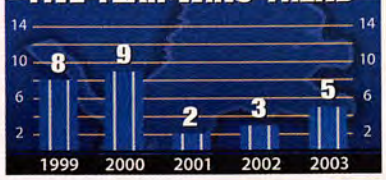
DEFENSE

LE	Robert Porcher
LT	Dan Wilkinson
RT	Shaun Rogers
RE	James Hall
LLB	Boss Bailey
MLB	Earl Holmes
RLB	Teddy Lehman
LCB	Fernando Bryant
RCB	Dre' Bly
SS	Brian Walker
FS	Brock Marion

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Nick Harris
K	Jason Hanson
PR	Eddie Drummond
KR	Eddie Drummond

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND



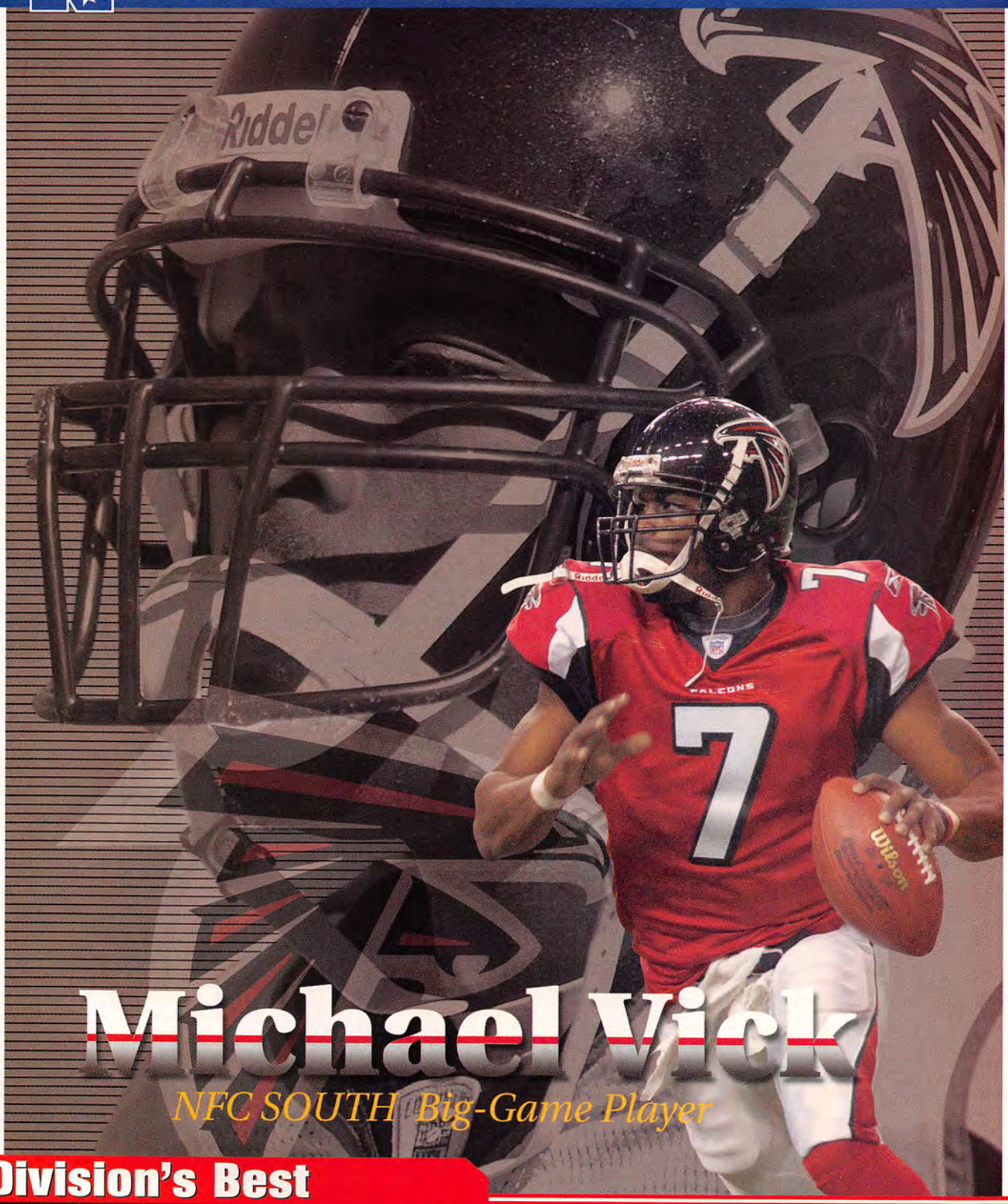
2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	7	Williams, Roy	WR	6-2	212	12-20-81	Texas
1	30	Jones, Kevin	RB	5-11	221	8-21-82	Virginia Tech
2	5	Lehman, Teddy	LB	6-1	238	11-18-81	Oklahoma
3	10	Smith, Keith	CB	5-11	192	3-20-80	McNeese State
5	8	Lewis, Alex	LB	5-11	227	6-11-81	Wisconsin
6	7	Butler, Kelly	T	6-7	334	7-24-82	Purdue

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ Chicago		
Sept. 12		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 2 vs. Houston		
Sept. 19		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 3 vs. Philadelphia		
Sept. 26		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 4 OPEN DATE		
WEEK 5 @ Atlanta		
Oct. 10		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 6 vs. Green Bay		
Oct. 17		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 7 @ New York Giants		
Oct. 24		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 8 @ Dallas		
Oct. 31		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 9 vs. Washington		
Nov. 7		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 10 @ Jacksonville		
Nov. 14		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 11 @ Minnesota		
Nov. 21		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 12 vs. Indianapolis		
Nov. 25		12:30
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 13 vs. Arizona		
Dec. 5		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 14 @ Green Bay		
Dec. 12		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 15 vs. Minnesota		
Dec. 19		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 16 vs. Chicago		
Dec. 26		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 17 @ Tennessee		
Jan. 2		1:00
W / L	Score:	

All times Eastern



RANDY WILSON/ Ai WIRE; BACKGROUND: TOMASSO DEROSA

Michael Vick

NFC SOUTH Big-Game Player

Division's Best

BIG-GAME PLAYER	RUSHER	RECEIVER	TACKLER	SPECIAL-TEAMS WARRIOR
Michael Vick, QB Atlanta	**Deuce McAllister, RB New Orleans**	**Steve Smith, WR Carolina**	**Derrick Brooks, LB Tampa Bay**	**Rod Smart, RB Carolina**
A healthy Vick can sometimes beat you by himself, which can account for a lot of big games.	He is the division's most complete back and the only consistent thing in the Saints offense.	The little man put up huge numbers last year and gave the offense an option beyond Stephen Davis.	Brooks makes so many tackles because he's one of the few players who truly goes sideline to sideline.	They love "He Hate Me" in Carolina because Smart is dangerous returning kicks and covering them.

With a healthy Vick, Atlanta could give 'Dixie Division' its third different Super Bowl entrant in as many years

By Pat Yasinskas, The Charlotte Observer

Since the National Football League went to its current division format, the NFC South is the only division that's had a team in two Super Bowls.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers won Super Bowl XXXVII and the Carolina Panthers lost by three points to New England in Super Bowl XXXVIII.

Can the Dixie Division make it three years in a row?

Why not? Carolina has a young team that's been kept pretty much intact. Tampa still has enough firepower (and some new additions) to rebound from its Super Bowl hangover.

But the NFC South just might have a chance to become the first division in this format to send three different teams to the Super Bowl in three years. The Atlanta Falcons, silenced by one major injury last year, are healthy and could end up ahead of the last two NFC champions.

Throw in the New Orleans Saints, who always seem to contend (but never seem to hold up down the stretch), and a case can be made that the NFC South is the league's toughest division. Carolina, Tampa Bay and Atlanta are poised to be very good, while the Saints have as much talent as anyone.

But that's where teams from this division could run into problems. The Bucs, Panthers, Saints and Falcons all have a chance to go deep into the playoffs—if they don't beat each other up first. That's a real possibility because there isn't a lot of love in the NFC South.

The Panthers and Bucs hate one another after two close and physical games last year that were surrounded by a war of words. A similar rivalry could develop between Tampa Bay and Atlanta, where former Bucs general manager Rich McKay landed after losing a power struggle with coach Jon Gruden. The Carolina-Atlanta rivalry the league has wanted for years finally could blossom because both teams might be good at the same time. And the Saints might finally stop fighting in their own locker room and hold up for an entire season.

With two recent Super Bowl teams and the return of a star quarterback, just about anything is possible in the NFC South.

1. ATLANTA FALCONS page 152

How much did the Atlanta Falcons miss quarterback Michael Vick when he was out with a broken leg most of last year? The only way to answer that is to look at what happened after Vick returned late in the season. The Falcons beat Carolina and went to Tampa and beat the Bucs.

McKay and new coach Jim Mora Jr. came into perhaps the ideal situation for a new management team. They've got a quarterback with the ability to dominate a game and all they have to do is fill in the holes around him. There aren't that many holes remaining. A healthy Vick could help Atlanta do what Carolina did a year ago: go from worst to first in the division.

2. CAROLINA PANTHERS page 156

This team stunned the world by getting to the Super Bowl. But the shock value is gone. The Panthers are built to be good for a long time and a return trip to the Super Bowl isn't out of the question. Coach John Fox and General Manager Marty Hurney have a relatively young nucleus and most of the core players are under contract for the long term. The defense is tremendous and the offense made strides last season and could get even better in quarterback Jake Delhomme's second season as a starter. But the return of Vick could hurt Carolina's chances. In games where Vick has played the last two seasons, the Panthers are 0-3 against the Falcons.

3. NEW ORLEANS SAINTS page 160

One of these years the Saints are going to play up to their enormous potential. They've got a dominant running back in Deuce McAllister and a talented quarterback in Aaron Brooks. That's why coach Jim Haslett is running out of excuses and, maybe, time. If Haslett, who is on one of the NFL's hottest seats, can't win with the likes of Brooks and McAllister this year, the Saints might find out if someone else can.

4. TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS page 164

The Super Bowl win was only two years ago and this isn't even close to the same team. The faces (John Lynch, Warren Sapp and Keyshawn Johnson) of the Bucs are gone. The heart (Derrick Brooks and Brad Johnson) remains. This team could go either way: rising back up dramatically or falling even harder than last year. It all depends on if Gruden, who finally gets to make the personnel moves he couldn't under McKay, can get a bunch of 30-something former Pro Bowlers to play like they did in their 20s.

TEAMMATE	SENSE OF HUMOR	INTELLECT	SIDELINE STRATEGIST	FRONT-OFFICE EXECUTIVE
Ronde Barber, CB Tampa Bay	**Todd Steussie, OT Carolina**	**Brentson Buckner, DT Carolina**	**Monte Kiffin, def. coord. Tampa Bay**	**Marty Hurney Carolina**
He was virtually a coach on the field when injuries forced the team to play young defensive backs last year.	He's been known to place bars of soap in the lockers of teammates who aren't known for their hygiene.	Nobody knows the game and its history better than Buckner, who someday will coach in the NFL.	He's always willing to try new wrinkles and that keeps him one step ahead of offenses.	This former sportswriter looks two or three years down the road with every salary-cap decision.

ATLANTA FALCONS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 1 2003 RECORD: 5-11

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Ty Detmer, QB** (DET)
- **Aaron Beasley, CB** (NYJ)
- **Eric Beverly, G** (DET)
- **Rod Coleman, DT** (OAK)
- **Eric Johnson, LB** (OAK)
- **Jason Webster, CB** (SF)
- **Dez White, WR** (CHI)
- **Hunter Goodwin, TE** (MIN)

STADIUM FACTS

Georgia Dome

Capacity: **71,149** Turf: **Artificial**
Tickets: **404-223-8000**
Web site: **www.atlantafalcons.com**

Avg. Attendance **70,460**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **98.9**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$34.63**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$8.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.75**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.25 / 12oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.50 / 24oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: The Falcons were the first team ever to beat the Packers at Lambeau Field in the postseason, winning 27-7 on Jan. 4, 2003.

STAT: Last season, the Falcons allowed an NFL-high 222 points in the second half of games, while ranking last in the league in second-half points scored (106).

LOOK IT UP: Michael Vick rushed for 173 yards in an overtime win over the Vikings in 2002, the highest total for a quarterback in NFL history. He also passed for 173 yards in the game.

THE COUNT:
15.6 – Atlanta's 2003 average margin of defeat, 29th in the NFL.
66 – NFL-high red-zone drives allowed by the Falcons last season (38 TD, 16 FG).
27:38 – Falcons' NFL-worst average time of possession last season.

New coach, new GM, new offense could have Falcons flying again

But everything depends on a healthy Michael Vick

Jim Mora Jr. and Rich McKay, the sons of football royalty, will begin their stint with the Atlanta Falcons with a very nice inheritance.

Mora, the new coach, and McKay, the general manager, are running a team with one huge building block in place. They take over a team that has quarterback Michael Vick, one of the game's most explosive players.

McKay, the son of legendary college and pro coach John McKay, knows a thing or two about building. He helped bring the Tampa Bay Buccaneers from laughingstock to Super Bowl XXXVII champion. With Vick and plenty of other offensive talent already in place, this rebuilding job isn't nearly as daunting.

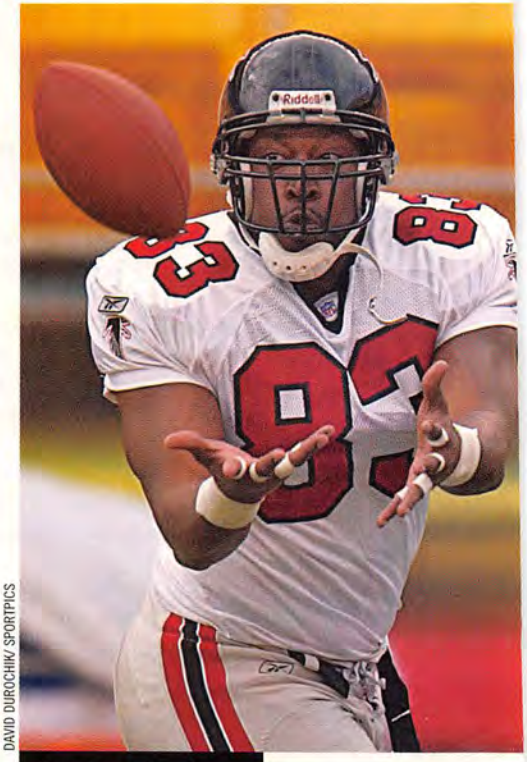
The Falcons limped to a 5-11 record as Vick spent most of last season recovering from a broken leg. He's healthy now and many believe a strong defense is all the Falcons need to compete for the NFC South crown. That's where Mora, the son of longtime NFL coach Jim Mora, comes in.

Mora Jr., who was hired away from his role as defensive coordinator for San Francisco, might be one of the best defensive minds in the league. He instantly did away with the 3-4 defense the Falcons ran and switched to the 4-3. He will also switch to the West Coast offense, so Vick could end up looking like the second coming of Steve Young.

Offensive line — Grade: C+

One of the best moves Mora made was hiring Alex Gibbs to coach the offensive line. Gibbs had great success in Denver, getting a bunch of overachievers to win Super Bowls. Gibbs will have to do the same thing with the Falcons because he doesn't have any blue-chip talent.

This group is somewhat small, but it's athletic and that's what Gibbs prefers. After starting eight games last year, Kevin Shaffer will take over as the starter at left tackle. Right tackle Todd Weiner is the team's best pass blocker and he'll protect the blind side of the left-handed Vick.



DAVID DUROCHIK/ SPORTPICS

Alge Crumpler, TE

The team signed free agent Eric Beverly from Detroit and he should be an upgrade at left guard over Travis Claridge, who was released. Right guard Kynan Forney has been a pleasant surprise since he was a seventh-round pick in 2001. He's technically sound, but has had some problems with injuries. Center Todd McClure is another former seventh-round pick who will start on this line.

This is a line that doesn't have any great individual talent, but the linemen are quick and athletic and they should be well-suited in a West Coast offense that won't require them to pass-block for long.

Quarterbacks — Grade: A

Vick's value to the Falcons was obvious last year as the team went from Super Bowl contender to fourth place when he was injured. Mora and McKay know Vick is the key to the franchise and they'll do everything they can to maximize his ability and keep him healthy.

The switch to the West Coast offense should help in keeping Vick from taking too many hits. But part of what makes Vick so special is his running ability, so offensive coordinator Greg Knapp has to allow Vick to scramble from time to time.

There may be a learning period as Vick adjusts to the new offense, and he'll have to

improve his accuracy for the system to prosper. That's part of the reason why veteran free agent Ty Detmer was signed. He has years of experience running the West Coast offense and should be able to help Vick learn the ropes. The team drafted Virginia's Matt Schaub in the third round, but he'll be brought along slowly.

Running backs

Grade: B+

Mora and Knapp will try to figure out the one thing Dan Reeves never could master. That's finding a balance between Warrick Dunn and T.J. Duckett. Reeves preferred to have a feature back, but neither Dunn nor Duckett prospered in that role. Mora will try to play both runners a lot and may use them in the same backfield at times.

McKay isn't one to pry into strategy, but he may point to the success Dunn had early in his career in Tampa Bay when the Bucs were pairing him with Mike Alstott. If the Falcons can come up with a similar plan to spread the carries around and get the most out of Dunn's speed and Duckett's power, the running game could be dramatically better. These are two excellent runners and Dunn can also be dangerous as a receiver.

Justin Griffith is the fullback, but he could give up some playing time if the Falcons use Dunn and Duckett in the same backfield.

Receivers

Grade: A

The Falcons gave Peerless Price a huge contract last year and the plan was to use him as a deep threat for Vick. With Vick injured and Doug Johnson playing, Price never had a chance to show what he can do. That should change dramatically this season. Look for Price to put up the big numbers he did a couple of years ago in Buffalo.

His supporting cast should also be much better. Brian Finneran probably will remain as the other starter, at least for the short term. But the team traded to get a second first-round pick to add Ohio State's Michael Jenkins. He's a big receiver who should be effective in the possession game. The Falcons also signed Dez White and he should get a fair amount of playing time in three-receiver sets.

Knapp will try to get more out of tight end Alge Crumpler, another big talent who struggled during Vick's absence. The Falcons signed former Minnesota tight end Hunter Goodwin, whose blocking ability should allow Crumpler to concentrate more on receiving duties.

Defensive line

Grade: C+

The switch to a four-man front should be a tremendous help to ends Brady Smith and Patrick Kerney. They'll be expected to rush the passer more and both have the ability to reach double digits in sacks. The Falcons were dismal against the run last year. Smith and Kerney should benefit from having an extra tackle.

One of the biggest signings of the offseason was getting tackle Rod Coleman from Oakland. He's solid against the run and also has excellent inside pass-rush skills. That should help Ed Jasper, the other line starter, tremendously.

Linebackers

Grade: B

Keith Brooking also should prosper in the new system. Brooking, a former Pro Bowler,

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	272.3	29
Rushing	121.8	14
Passing	150.5	31
Scoring	299	20
Punt Returns	14.3	2
Kick Returns	19.9	28
Red Zone TD %	52.2	13
Total Defense	381.8	32
Against Rush	144.3	29
Against Pass	237.5	32
Points Allowed	422	30
Interceptions	15	14T
Sacks	36	11
Turnover Diff.	0	14T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
252	99	127	26

RED ZONE OFFENSE

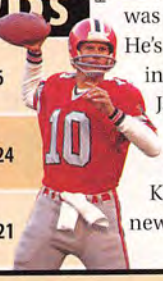
Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
46	214	24	16

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
17	14	4	3

FALCONS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **MICHAEL VICK**
   Career Passing Yards: **4,306**
   Career TD Passes: **22**
2. **STEVE BARTKOWSKI**
   Career Passing Yards: **24,124**
   Career TD Passes: **156**
3. **CHRIS CHANDLER**
   Career Passing Yards: **28,021**
   Career TD Passes: **168**



FINALSHOT/JRP

Blank expects full-time McKay in front office to be worth a few more wins

Rich McKay has not endured a losing season since 1996. Even last year, working for two losing franchises, he managed to finish 9-7.

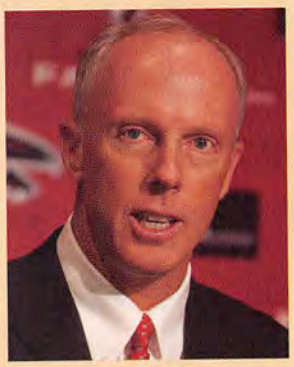
The Falcons went 2-0 after McKay's unusual in-season hiring as general manager in December, including a victory over his former Tampa Bay employer.

McKay, of course, had little to do with those wins. Still, the Falcons believe he can spark an immediate turnaround in 2004—and not just because Michael Vick should be available for the entire season.

No executive has done a better job of discovering undervalued talent in the draft, managing the salary cap and avoiding the type of back-loaded deals for aging veterans that can cripple a franchise for years.

McKay might have the most unique background in the NFL. The son of original Buccaneers coach John McKay, he served as a ball boy before graduating from Princeton and earning a law degree. Though not a talent evaluator, per se, he knows the salary cap and business side of the game better than anyone. He even spearheaded the drive for the Buccaneers' new stadium, saving Tampa from losing the NFL. Along the way, he's been part of just about every influential NFL committee.

No wonder McKay is often mentioned as Paul Tagliabue's successor. Falcons owner Arthur Blank tried to hire McKay two years ago but the Glazer family ownership in Tampa demanded compensation. When McKay could no longer work with power-hungry Jon Gruden, the Bucs set him free.



Rich McKay

In Tampa, McKay developed a reputation for looking beyond combine performances and physical tools to find draft bargains, guys like current Falcons running back Warrick Dunn, a surprise first-rounder by Tampa Bay in 1997.

"You don't always need superstars," Dunn says. "You need guys that are going to come in and be dependable. (McKay) does a great job with that."

McKay raised a few eyebrows with the hiring of untested Jim Mora Jr. as head coach. But given McKay's stellar architectural work in Tampa, nobody is going to argue with his latest blueprints in Atlanta.

—Pete Williams

ERIK S. LESSER/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTO

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 5, Lost 11

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	27-13	at Dallas
09/14	L	33-31	Washington
09/21	L	31-10	Tampa Bay
09/28	L	23-3	at Carolina
10/05	L	39-26	Minnesota
10/13	L	36-0	at St. Louis
10/19	L	45-17	New Orleans
11/02	L	23-16	Philadelphia
11/09	W	27-7	at New York Giants
11/16	L	23-20 (OT)	at New Orleans
11/23	L	38-31	Tennessee
11/30	L	17-13	at Houston
12/07	W	20-14	Carolina
12/14	L	38-7 (OT)	at Indianapolis
12/20	W	30-28	at Tampa Bay
12/28	W	21-14	Jacksonville

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Duckett	197	779	4.0	55	11
Dunn	125	672	5.4	69t	3
Vick	40	255	6.4	43	1
Griffith	38	168	4.4	15	0
Dantzler	8	21	2.6	12	1
D. Johnson	14	21	1.5	13	1
Layne	1	15	15	15	0
Kittner	8	13	1.6	7	0
Price	2	3	1.5	5	0
McCord	2	2	1.0	1	0
Falcons	**435**	**1949**	**4.5**	**69t**	**17**
Opponents	**499**	**2308**	**4.6**	**63t**	**21**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Price	64	838	13.1	49	3
Crumpler	44	552	12.5	63	3
Dunn	37	336	9.1	86t	2
Finneran	26	368	14.2	38	2
Griffith	21	122	5.8	24	2
Duckett	11	94	8.5	21	0
Kozlowski	10	87	8.7	19	0
McCord	9	121	13.4	33	0
Farris	6	100	16.7	42t	2
Edwards	1	10	10.0	10	0
Layne	1	3	3.0	3	0
Falcons	**230**	**2631**	**11.4**	**86t**	**14**
Opponents	**323**	**4005**	**12.4**	**76t**	**28**

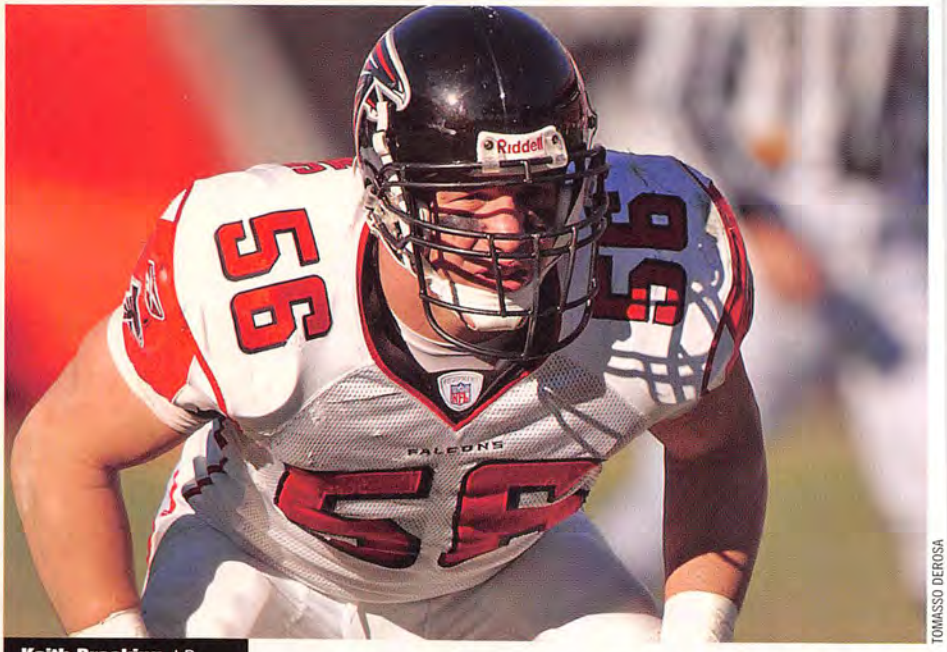
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
D. Johnson	243	136	1655	8	12
Kittner	114	44	391	2	6
Vick	100	50	585	4	3
Dantzler	1	0	0	0	0
Duckett	1	0	0	0	0
Mohr	1	0	0	0	0
Falcons	**460**	**230**	**2631**	**14**	**21**
Opponents	**508**	**323**	**4005**	**28**	**15**

SACKS

E. Johnson 8.0, Kerney 6.5, T. Hall 5.0, Smith 4.0, Jasper 3.0, Stewart 2.5, Draft 2.0, Newman 2.0, Mathis 1.0, McCadam 1.0, Rogers 1.0

Falcons 36.0, Opponents 35.0

t=touchdown



Keith Brooking, LB

TOMASSO DEROSA

has good speed and should benefit from an anticipated move to weakside linebacker.

The new middle linebacker, Chris Draft, showed some pass-rush skills in the 3-4. That still may be useful, but Draft and strongside linebacker Matt Stewart will be asked to focus more on the run as the Falcons try to improve on last year's biggest defensive weakness.

Defensive backs

Grade: C+

There will be some major changes in the secondary after the departures of Juran Bolden and Ray Buchanan, but that's not necessarily bad news. Mora, a longtime defensive coach, got a youthful infusion of talent for the secondary by using his first draft pick on Virginia Tech cornerback DeAngelo Hall. It's likely Hall will immediately replace Tod McBride in the starting lineup, but McBride will give the team a solid nickel back.

One of Mora's first moves in free agency was to bring in Jason Webster, whom he coached in San Francisco. Pairing Hall and Webster gives the Falcons younger and faster legs in the secondary. There is already youth at safety. Second-year pro Bryan Scott will start at strong safety and Cory Hall is a solid free safety.

Special teams

Grade: B+

The special teams got a big boost with the drafting of Hall. He's an outstanding return man and the Falcons have indicated they probably will let him handle punt returns. That will allow Allen Rossum to focus on kickoffs, but Hall may also help some in that area.

Punter Chris Mohr doesn't have a huge leg, but he's one of the league's best directional punters and very consistent. That's why Mohr is usually among the league leaders in net punting. Kicker Jay Feely is one of the league's better young kickers.

Management

Grade: A+

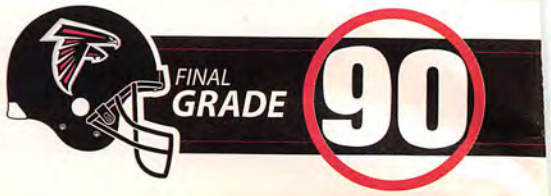
When McKay became general manager of the Bucs, they were them league's worst franchise. By using a calm, common-sense approach, he built Tampa Bay into a Super Bowl champion. After an undeserved push out the door by coach Jon Gruden, McKay will get a fresh start in Atlanta, and the rebuilding job isn't nearly as mountainous as it was in Tampa.

McKay brought personnel director Tim Ruskell in from Tampa Bay and they'll form a three-headed, decision-making team with Mora. That system worked to perfection when Tony Dungy was the coach in Tampa, and it should work well with Mora. It won't be long before McKay has the last laugh on Gruden.

Bottom line

Mora landed in a great situation for a first-year head coach. He took over a team with a bad record but tons of talent. By injecting his intense personality into the team, Mora made an instant impression in the first minicamp.

The Falcons have shed the laid-back attitude that was prevalent under Reeves and they're ready to turn things around. Of course, the return of Vick alone could be all the Falcons need to make a run in the playoffs. After all, they were considered a Super Bowl contender before his injury. With the new coaching staff tailoring everything to his needs, Vick could take the Falcons a long way.



FALCONS ROSTER

Jim Mora Jr., head coach

Dennis Allen, def. asst.; **Alex Gibbs**, asst. head coach/off. line; **Greg Knapp**, off. coord.; **Ed Donatell**, def. coord.; **Joe DeCamillis**, special teams coord.; **Emmitt Thomas**, senior def. asst./secondary; **Clancy Barone**, asst. off. line; **Chris Beake**, LBs; **Jeff Jagodzinski**, TEs; **Bill Johnson**, def. line; **Mike Johnson**, QBs; **Brett Maxie**, def. backs; **Robert Prince**, off. asst.; **George Stewart**, WRs; **Ollie Wilson**, RBs

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
14	Detmer, Ty	QB	6-1	189	10-30-1967	8	Brigham Young
7	Vick, Michael	QB	6-1	215	6-26-1980	3	Virginia Tech

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	Beverly, Eric	G	6-3	300	3-28-1974	6	Miami (OH)
64	Bibla, Martin	G	6-3	306	10-4-1979	2	Miami (FL)
65	Forney, Kynan	G	6-3	307	9-8-1978	3	Hawaii
63	Garza, Roberto	G	6-2	296	3-26-1979	3	Texas A&M-Kingsville
79	Herndon, Steve	G	6-4	292	5-25-1977	3	Georgia
72	Knutson, Matt	T	6-7	305	6-14-1979	0	North Dakota
62	McClure, Todd	C	6-1	286	2-16-1977	4	LSU
67	Moore, Michael	G	6-2	318	11-1-1976	2	Troy State
73	Morgan, Dwayne	T	6-4	300	5-3-1974	1	Clemson
76	Shaffer, Kevin	T	6-5	290	3-2-1980	2	Tulsa
74	Weiner, Todd	T	6-4	297	9-16-1975	6	Kansas State
70	Whitfield, Bob	T	6-5	310	10-18-1971	12	Stanford

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
30	Dantzler, Woodrow	RB	5-10	209	10-4-1979	2	Clemson
45	Duckett, T.J.	RB	6-1	254	2-17-1981	2	Michigan State
28	Dunn, Warrick	RB	5-9	180	1-5-1975	7	Florida State
27	Fenderson, James	RB	5-9	200	10-24-1976	3	Hawaii
33	Griffith, Justin	RB	5-11	232	4-13-1981	1	Mississippi State
38	Layne, George	RB	5-11	250	10-9-1978	3	Texas Christian

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
89	Brewer, Sean	TE	6-4	255	10-5-1977	2	San Jose State
83	Crumpler, Alge	TE	6-2	262	12-23-1977	3	North Carolina
82	Dunbar, LaTarence	WR	5-11	196	8-15-1980	1	TCU
80	Edwards, Terrence	WR	6-1	176	4-29-1979	1	Georgia
87	Farris, Jimmy	WR	6-1	200	4-13-1978	1	Montana
86	Finneran, Brian	WR	6-5	210	1-31-1976	5	Villanova
	Goodwin, Hunter	TE	6-5	268	10-10-1972	8	Texas A&M
88	Lewis, John	WR	6-1	195	5-30-1980	0	Oklahoma State
81	Price, Peerless	WR	5-11	190	10-27-1976	5	Tennessee
48	Rackley, Derek	TE	6-4	250	7-18-1977	4	Minnesota
	White, Dez	WR	6-1	215	8-23-1979	4	Georgia Tech

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
57	Coleman, Rod	DT	6-2	285	8-16-1976	5	East Carolina
98	Hall, Travis	DE	6-5	295	8-3-1972	9	Brigham Young
93	House, Raymond	DE	6-2	277	10-7-1980	0	Arkansas
95	Jasper, Ed	DT	6-2	293	1-18-1973	7	Texas A&M
61	Johnson, Ellis	DT	6-2	288	10-30-1973	9	Florida
97	Kerney, Patrick	DE	6-5	273	12-30-1976	5	Virginia
68	Lake, Antwan	DE	6-4	308	7-10-1979	1	West Virginia
91	Smith, Brady	DE	6-5	274	6-5-1973	8	Colorado State
99	Veal, Demetrin	DE	6-2	288	8-11-1981	1	Tennessee

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
21	Beasley, Aaron	CB	6-1	205	7-7-1973	8	West Virginia
29	Carpenter, Keion	S	5-11	205	10-31-1977	5	Virginia Tech
27	Hall, Cory	S	6-1	213	12-5-1976	5	Fresno State
41	Johnson, Eric	S	6-1	220	4-30-1976	4	Nebraska
23	Mathis, Kevin	CB	5-9	185	4-29-1974	7	Texas A&M-Commerce
32	McBride, Tod	CB	6-1	208	1-26-1976	5	UCLA
47	McCadam, Kevin	S	6-1	219	3-6-1979	2	Virginia Tech
25	Ross, Derek	CB	5-10	197	1-5-1980	2	Ohio State
20	Rossum, Allen	CB	5-8	178	10-22-1975	6	Notre Dame
24	Scott, Bryan	CB	6-1	219	4-13-1981	1	Penn State
39	Shabazz, Siddeeq	S	5-11	200	2-5-1981	1	New Mexico State
36	Webster, Jason	CB	5-10	187	9-8-1977	4	Texas A&M
26	Williams, Brandon	CB	5-11	186	11-17-1980	0	Michigan
37	Williams, Tyrone	CB	5-11	193	5-31-1973	8	Nebraska

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
56	Brooking, Keith	LB	6-2	245	10-30-1975	6	Georgia Tech
54	Draft, Chris	LB	5-11	232	2-26-1976	6	Stanford
58	Johnson, J.R.	LB	6-1	240	6-20-1979	1	Syracuse
53	Newman, Keith	LB	6-2	248	1-19-1977	5	North Carolina
90	Overstreet, Will	LB	6-2	259	10-7-1979	2	Tennessee
51	Riley, Karon	LB	6-2	268	8-23-1978	3	Minnesota
92	Robinson, Terrence	LB	6-1	240	3-12-1980	1	Oklahoma State
52	Stewart, Matt	LB	6-3	232	8-31-1979	3	Vanderbilt
50	Ulmer, Artie	LB	6-3	247	7-30-1973	5	Valdosta State

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Feely, Jay	K	5-10	206	5-23-1976	3	Michigan
13	Mohr, Chris	P	6-5	215	5-11-1966	14	Alabama

TOMASSO DEROSA

GLENN DANFORTH

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Michael Vick
RB	Warrick Dunn
FB	Justin Griffith
LT	Kevin Shaffer
LG	Eric Beverly
C	Todd McClure
RG	Kynan Forney
RT	Todd Weiner
TE	Alge Crumpler
WR	Peerless Price
WR	Brian Finneran

DEFENSE

LE	Patrick Kerney
LT	Rod Coleman
RT	Ed Jasper
RE	Brady Smith
SLB	Matt Stewart
MLB	Chris Draft
WLB	Keith Brooking
LCB	DeAngelo Hall
RCB	Jason Webster
SS	Bryan Scott
FS	Cory Hall

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Chris Mohr
K	Jay Feely
PR	DeAngelo Hall
KR	Allen Rossum

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ San Francisco		
Sept. 12		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 2 vs. St. Louis		
Sept. 19		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 3 vs. Arizona		
Sept. 26		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 4 @ Carolina		
Oct. 3		4:05
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 5 vs. Detroit		
Oct. 10		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 6 vs. San Diego		
Oct. 17		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 7 @ Kansas City		
Oct. 24		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 8 @ Denver		
Oct. 31		4:05
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 9 OPEN DATE		
WEEK 10 vs. Tampa Bay		
Nov. 14		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 11 @ New York Giants		
Nov. 21		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 12 vs. New Orleans		
Nov. 28		4:05
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 13 @ Tampa Bay		
Dec. 5		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 14 vs. Oakland		
Dec. 12		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 15 vs. Carolina		
Dec. 18		8:30
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 16 @ New Orleans		
Dec. 26		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 17 @ Seattle		
Jan. 2		4:05
W / L	Score:	

All times Eastern

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	8	Hall, DeAngelo	CB	5-10	197	11-19-83	Virginia Tech
1	29	Jenkins, Michael	WR	6-4	217	6-18-82	Ohio State
3	27	Schaub, Matt	QB	6-5	237	6-25-81	Virginia
4	5	Williams, Demorrio	LB	6-1	232	7-6-80	Nebraska
5	10	Lavalais, Chad	DT	6-1	293	4-15-79	LSU
6	21	Pruitt, Etric	S	6-1	197	8-16-81	Southern Miss
7	18	Wilson, Quincy	RB	5-9	225	4-26-81	West Virginia

CAROLINA PANTHERS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 2 2003 RECORD: 11-5

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Terrance Shaw, DB** (OAK)
- **Jessie Armstead, LB** (WAS)
- **Adam Meadows, OL** (IND)
- **Artrell Hawkins, CB** (CIN)
- **Rod Walker, DT** (GB)
- **Brandon Short, LB** (NYG)
- **Travis Claridge, OG** (ATL)

STADIUM FACTS

Bank of America Stadium

Capacity: **73,258** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **704-358-7800**
Web site: **www.panthers.com**

Avg. Attendance **72,821**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **99.3**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$42.27**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$5.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.00**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.50 / 22oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.75 / 22oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

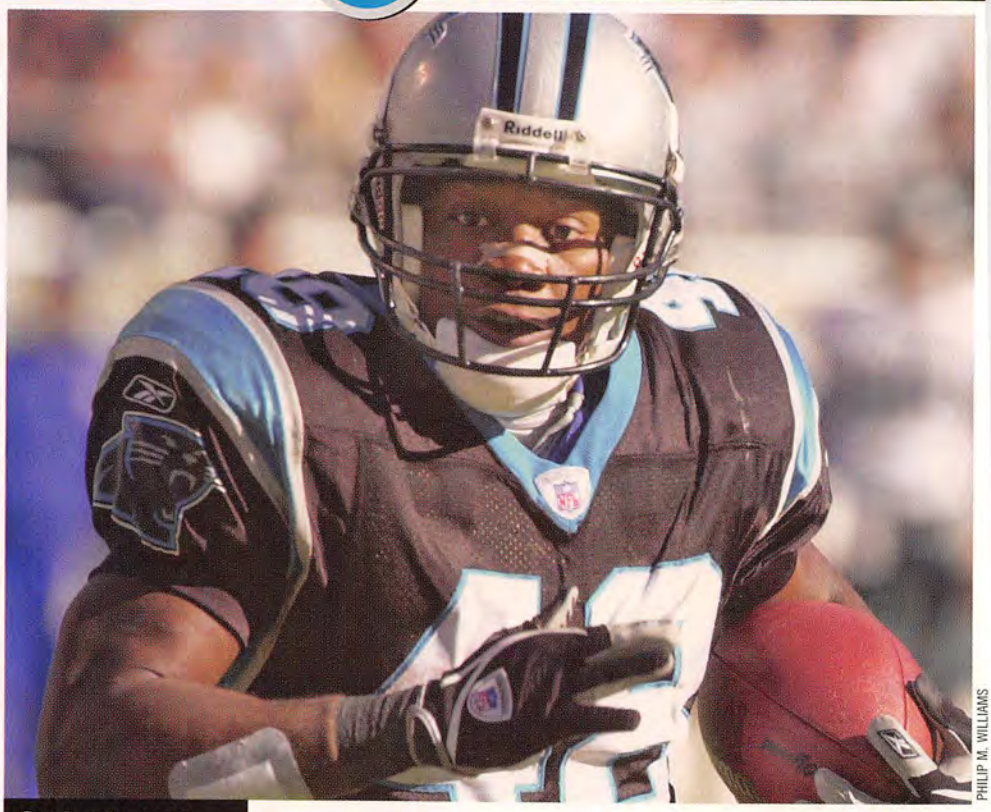
QUICK HITS

FACT: Bill Goldberg, the first player ever released by the Panthers' organization, went on to become a star wrestler in the WCW. He was the team's No.33 pick in the 1995 expansion draft.

STAT: Over the past two seasons, Carolina is a combined 13-3 in September and December, but just 5-11 in October and November.

LOOK IT UP: The Panthers' 29-23 victory over St. Louis in the divisional playoffs last season was the fifth double-overtime game in NFL history, but only the second such contest won on a touchdown.

THE COUNT:
-7 – Total yards for Carolina in the first 27 minutes of Super Bowl XXXVIII.
211 – Jake Delhomme's fourth-quarter passing yards in Super Bowl XXXVIII.



PHILIP M. WILLIAMS

Stephen Davis, RB

Long-term approach working like a charm for the Super Bowl Cinderella Panthers

Filling holes in secondary, O-line are the big concerns for Fox

When Carolina Panthers owner Jerry Richardson was awarded an expansion franchise, he promised to win a Super Bowl within the first 10 seasons. After years of making Richardson look foolish, the Panthers could make him look like a sage as the deadline approaches.

Entering their 10th season, the Panthers may be poised for a championship run. Coming off a 32-29 loss to New England in Super Bowl XXXVIII, Carolina kept its core together. The Panthers showed they weren't flukes last season and they could be even better this time around. Key young players such as Jake Delhomme, Kris Jenkins, Julius Peppers, Dan Morgan, DeShaun Foster and Steve Smith are only starting to reach their prime.

After years of overspending for veteran free agents, the Panthers, under the direction of coach John Fox and General Manager Marty Hurney, now have a plan in which they build through the draft firmly in place. The goal is to stay good for the long term. Last year may have been just the surface of what the plan can achieve. This might be the year Richardson's promise comes true.

Offensive line — Grade: B

A unit that was very good last season was torn apart. Guard Jeno James left through free agency, guard Kevin Donnalley retired and left tackle Todd Steussie was released. But the coaches view this as addition by subtraction and the line should be better off in the long run.

Steussie was released to clear the way for right tackle Jordan Gross to move to the left side. Gross, who had an excellent rookie season, is the prototype left tackle with excellent quickness and footwork. He'll protect Delhomme's blind side and should be an upgrade over Steussie. Veteran Adam Meadows was signed to play the right side. He is also the kind of quick athlete the Panthers want on the line.

Center Jeff Mitchell will be the only starter from last year remaining in the same position.

He'll have to help ease the transition for two new guards. Second-year pro Bruce Nelson is likely to start at right guard, with Atlanta free-agent pickup Travis Claridge taking over the left guard job.

Quarterbacks

Grade: B

Delhomme went from career backup to Super Bowl quarterback in one season. What can he do for an encore?

Plenty.

Delhomme made huge strides the second half of last season and should continue to improve. He started to learn to be patient and did a much better job of finding secondary receivers. That patience should continue to grow after last year's success and Delhomme should give the team more of a passing threat to complement the running game.

Delhomme showed a knack for late rallies. But the confidence that comes from last season's success could mean more consistency from the passing game, and the Panthers might be able to build big leads and protect them.

Running backs

Grade: A

Stephen Davis ran for a franchise-record 1,444 yards last season and was the focal point of the offense. He'll be in that role again, but should have more help. With Davis hampered by injuries late last year, backup DeShaun Foster started to emerge as a threat. That will earn Foster more carries this season and should only help Davis.

Davis and Foster may be the perfect one-two punch. Davis has the power to wear down a defense and Foster has the speed to run past it.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	321.3	16
Rushing	130.9	7
Passing	190.4	18
Scoring	325	15
Punt Returns	10.1	13
Kick Returns	22.4	10
Red Zone TD %	41.9	30T
Total Defense	295.3	8
Against Rush	107.6	11
Against Pass	187.7	9
Points Allowed	304	10
Interceptions	16	12T
Sacks	40	7
Turnover Diff.	-5	25T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
284	114	146	24

RED ZONE OFFENSE

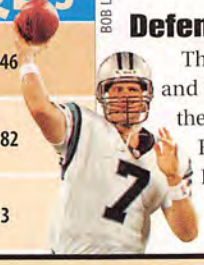
Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
43	184	18	20

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
9	19	5	3

PANTHERS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **STEVE BEUERLEIN**
   Career Passing Yards: **24,046**
   Career TD Passes: **147**
2. **KERRY COLLINS**
   Career Passing Yards: **26,382**
   Career TD Passes: **132**
3. **JAKE DELHOMME**
   Career Passing Yards: **3,853**
   Career TD Passes: **22**



BOB LEVERONE/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTO

The coaches will try to mix these two runners to keep defenses off-balance. Foster and Davis are also threats as receivers.

Fullback Brad Hoover rarely gets any carries, but he's developed into a solid lead blocker.

Receivers

Grade: B

At 5-foot-9, Steve Smith may be small, but he was huge down the stretch last season. Smith can break a big play anytime he touches the ball, which is why the team rewarded him with a six-year, $27 million contract. Smith has emerged as an elite receiver with breakaway speed and the ability to get open in the short game. He'll draw more coverage this year, but that could open things up for others.

Muhsin Muhammad may not put up the numbers he did a few years ago, but he's a solid No. 2 receiver and also helps as a blocker in the running game. Second-round pick Keary Colbert is viewed as an eventual replacement for Muhammad, whose contract is up after next season. Veteran Ricky Proehl has a knack for coming through with clutch catches and will still get some playing time.

Tight ends Kris Mangum and Mike Seidman spend most of their time blocking, but both have decent receiving skills and could be bigger factors in the passing game.

Defensive line

Grade: A

The entire team is built around this unit and it might be the best defensive line in the league. Jenkins and defensive end Mike Rucker were Pro Bowlers last year and Peppers has the potential to join them. Jenkins is the key to this line. He's the

With defensive front under contract through 2007, Panthers have staying power

Because of the NFL's parity-driven structure, the Carolina Panthers likely will find that making it back to the Super Bowl is every bit as tough as getting their the first time—even two years removed from a 1-15 season.

After all, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and Oakland Raiders failed to reach the playoffs after squaring off in Super Bowl XXXVII. The New England Patriots posted a 9-7 mark between their Super Bowl appearances and sat out the postseason.

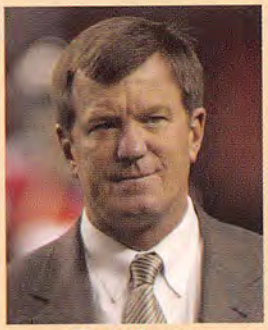
The NFL gives winning teams the toughest schedules the following season. The Super Bowl participants also have the least hope of reloading through the draft since they receive the last two picks in each round.

The Panthers cannot expect to have an impact first-rounder like Julius Peppers (No. 2 overall in 2002) or Jordan Gross (No. 8 last season) as they did using picks obtained from 1-15 and 7-9 seasons.

No matter. General Manager Marty Hurney is a bargain shopper on draft day. Last year, he nabbed cornerback Ricky Manning Jr. with a late pick in the third round.

Hurney, who once worked as a sportswriter covering the Redskins, trained for his current gig under Bobby Beathard, who as general manager of three of Joe Gibbs' four Super Bowl teams took the acquisition of unheralded and undervalued free agents to the level of art form.

Hurney has learned well, picking running back Stephen Davis and quarterback Jake Delhomme off the scrap heap before last season. Being a numbers guy instead of a traditional football evaluator has enabled him to focus on long-term salary-cap management.



Marty Hurney

Unlike other Super Bowl teams that mortgaged the future to load up on veterans with cap-damaging contracts to make a title run, the Panthers are positioned well for the long term. Their dominant front four of Peppers, Kris Jenkins, Mike Rucker and Brentson Buckner is wrapped up through 2007.

Panthers coach John Fox, like Bill Belichick and Tony Dungy, is a defense-first coach who values character in the locker room. These days, that philosophy—along with cap management—is a good recipe for long-term success.

—Pete Williams

KENT SMITH

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 11, Lost 5

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	24-23	Jacksonville
09/14	W	12-9 (OT)	at Tampa Bay
09/28	W	23-3	Atlanta
10/05	W	19-13	New Orleans
10/12	W	23-20 (OT)	at Indianapolis
10/19	L	37-17	Tennessee
10/26	W	23-20 (OT)	at New Orleans
11/02	L	14-10	at Houston
11/09	W	27-24	Tampa Bay
11/16	W	20-17	Washington
11/23	L	24-20	at Dallas
11/30	L	25-16	Philadelphia
12/07	L	20-14 (OT)	at Atlanta
12/14	W	20-17	at Arizona
12/21	W	20-14	Detroit
12/28	W	37-24	at New York Giants

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Davis	318	1444	4.5	40	8
Foster	113	429	3.8	21	0
Goings	10	69	6.9	17	0
Smart	20	49	2.5	6	0
S. Smith	11	42	3.8	14	0
Delhomme	42	39	0.9	9	1
Hoover	6	21	3.5	5	0
Muhammad	2	-2	-1.0	0	0
Panthers	**522**	**2091**	**4.0**	**40**	**9**
Opponents	**434**	**1722**	**4.0**	**43**	**10**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
S. Smith	88	1110	12.6	67t	7
Muhammad	54	837	15.5	60	3
Proehl	27	389	14.4	66t	4
Foster	26	207	8.0	47	2
Mangum	17	199	11.7	34	0
Davis	14	159	11.4	25	0
Goings	12	97	8.1	14	1
Hoover	12	72	6.0	17	1
Wiggins	8	80	10.0	23	1
Seidman	5	35	7.0	14	0
Smart	3	11	3.7	5	0
Hankton	2	27	13.5	15	0
Dyson	2	15	7.5	9	0
Panthers	**270**	**3238**	**12.0**	**67t**	**19**
Opponents	**299**	**3215**	**10.8**	**65t**	**19**

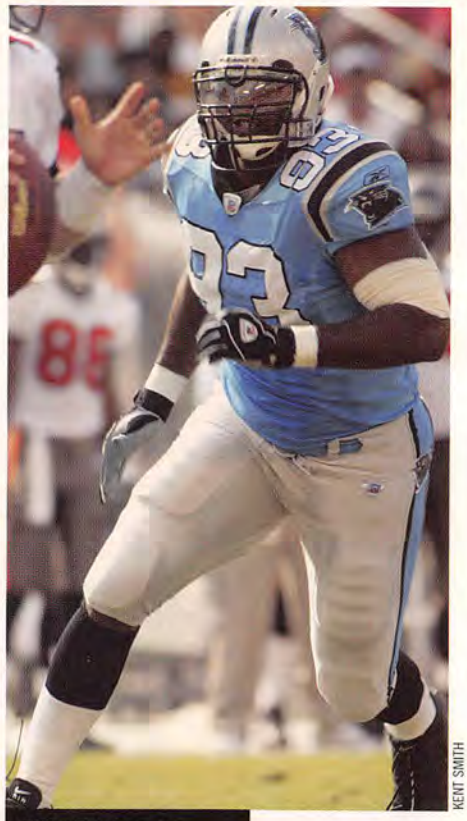
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Delhomme	449	266	3219	19	16
Peete	10	4	19	0	0
Sauerbrun	1	0	0	0	0
Panthers	**460**	**270**	**3238**	**19**	**16**
Opponents	**522**	**299**	**3215**	**19**	**16**

SACKS

Rucker 12.0, Peppers 7.0, Jenkins 5.0, Wallace 5.0, Burton 2.0, Cousin 2.0, Allen 1.0, Grant 1.0, Rasmussen 1.0, Wesley 1.0, Witherspoon 1.0, Buckner 0.5, Howard 0.5

Panthers 40.0, Opponents 26.0

t=touchdown



KENT SMITH

Mike Rucker, DE

consummate tackle, able to stuff the run and get pressure on the passer. More than ever, the Panthers will need pressure from Jenkins, Rucker and Peppers to help ease transition in the defensive backfield.

The team strongly believes the key to a good pass rush is having enough depth to rotate and keep players fresh. Brentson Buckner, the other starting defensive tackle, frequently gives way to Shane Burton. The Panthers want to keep Jenkins as fresh as possible, which is why free agent Rod Walker was signed to bring a fourth tackle into the rotation. There also is a strong rotation at end, where Al Wallace is as good as many starters on other teams.

Linebackers

Grade: B

The expected return of Mark Fields from Hodgkin's disease could make this unit very solid. Fields, who plays on the strongside, has excellent speed and is solid against the run, in pass coverage and as a pass rusher. His ability to pressure the quarterback will give the team a fifth pass rusher, something that was lacking last year, and help the secondary. The team also signed former Pro Bowler Jessie Armstead and free agent Brandon Short just in case Fields is slow in making a full return.

When healthy, Dan Morgan is as good as any middle linebacker in the league, as evidenced by his 25 tackles in the Super Bowl. Morgan and weakside linebacker Will Witherspoon both possess excellent speed, and all three starting linebackers can go sideline to sideline.

Secondary

Grade: C

This unit was overhauled after the Super Bowl, and that's not necessarily a bad thing. Cornerbacks Reggie Howard and Terry Cousin and free safety Deon Grant are gone. But the coaches believed Howard and Cousin were only marginal corners. Second-year Ricky Manning took over for Cousin near the end of last season and could be the shutdown corner the team has been looking for. Manning has a nose for the ball and came up with lots of big plays in the postseason.

The Panthers used their first-round pick on Ohio State's Chris Gamble, who has unlimited potential. But the team signed veteran free agents Artrell Hawkins and Terrance Shaw and either one could hold down a starting role until Gamble is ready to contribute.

Veteran strong safety Mike Minter is the only starter from last season's opening-day lineup still around. He'll be counted on to lead a young group. Minter is an excellent tackler who helps out against the run and doesn't make many mistakes in coverage. He'll have to tutor second-year pro Colin Branch, the likely replacement for Grant.

Special teams

Grade: B+

Todd Sauerbrun may be the league's best punter and he helps tremendously with field position. John Kasay has shown he can kick under pressure. The return game is excellent with Smith handling punts and Rod Smart taking care of kickoffs. Special-teams coach Scotty O'Brien always produces excellent coverage units and Jarrod Cooper anchors them.

Management

Grade: A

Fox and Hurney are a perfect team. They don't act impulsively and measure the long-term implications of every decision. They've gotten away from the days when the team was a prisoner to the salary cap by not pursuing big-money free agents. Instead, the emphasis is on keeping the core players together, which is why the Panthers should be a playoff contender for years to come.

Bottom line

The Panthers won't be able to surprise anyone after the Super Bowl trip and the schedule will be very difficult. But this is a team that's solid almost everywhere and some of the young players will be better than last season. As long as the Panthers don't fall victim to the lofty expectations, they have a chance to make another run deep into the playoffs.

FINAL GRADE **89**

PANTHERS ROSTER

John Fox, head coach

Denny Crossman, special teams asst.; **Ken Flajole**, LBs/def. asst.; **Dan Henning**, off. coord.-quarterbacks; **David Magazu**, TEs; **Mike Maser**, off. line; **Sam Mills**, LBs; **Scott O'Brien**, asst. head coach/special teams; **Rod Perry**, secondary; **Jim Skipper**, RBs; **Sal Sunseri**, def. line; **Mike Trgovac**, def. coord.; **Richard Williamson**, WRs; **Mike Gillhamer**, def. asst./secondary; **Mike McCoy**, off. asst.

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Delhomme, Jake	QB	6-2	205	1-10-1975	3	Louisiana-Lafayette
9	Peete, Rodney	QB	6-1	230	3-16-1966	14	Southern California
16	Weinke, Chris	QB	6-4	232	7-31-1972	2	Florida State

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
79	Brzezinski, Doug	G	6-4	305	3-11-1976	5	Boston College
71	Claridge, Travis	G	6-5	300	3-23-1978	4	Southern California
69	Gross, Jordan	T	6-4	300	7-20-1980	1	Utah
	Meadows, Adam	T	6-5	290	1-25-1974	7	Georgia
60	Mitchell, Jeff	C	6-4	300	1-29-1974	6	Florida
72	Nelson, Bruce	G	6-5	301	5-12-1979	1	Iowa
76	Reyes, Tutan	G	6-3	299	10-28-1977	1	Mississippi
73	Tuten, Melvin	T	6-7	320	11-11-1971	6	Syracuse
65	Tylski, Rich	G	6-4	306	2-27-1971	6	Utah State

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
48	Davis, Stephen	RB	6-1	230	3-1-1974	8	Auburn
20	Foster, DeShaun	RB	6-1	222	1-10-1980	1	UCLA
37	Goings, Nick	RB	6-1	225	1-26-1978	3	Pittsburgh
45	Hoover, Brad	RB	6-1	242	11-11-1976	4	Western Carolina
32	Smart, Rod	RB	5-11	201	1-9-1977	3	Western Kentucky

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Baker, Eugene	WR	6-2	183	3-18-1976	2	Kent State
88	Hankton, Karl	WR	6-2	202	7-24-1970	5	Trinity (IL)
86	Mangum, Kris	TE	6-4	249	8-15-1973	7	Mississippi
87	Muhammad, Muhsin	WR	6-2	217	5-5-1973	8	Michigan State
81	Proehl, Ricky	WR	6-1	190	3-7-1968	14	Wake Forest
82	Seidman, Mike	TE	6-4	261	2-11-1981	1	UCLA
89	Smith, Steve	WR	5-9	179	5-12-1979	3	Utah
83	Young, Walter	WR	6-5	214	12-7-1979	1	Illinois

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
99	Buckner, Brentson	DT	6-2	305	9-30-1971	10	Clemson
98	Burton, Shane	DT	6-6	305	1-18-1974	8	Tennessee
77	Jenkins, Kris	DT	6-4	315	8-3-1979	3	Maryland
97	Mercer, Giradie	DT	6-2	285	3-19-1976	1	Marshall
94	Moorehead, Kindal	DT	6-2	285	10-14-1978	1	Alabama
90	Peppers, Julius	DE	6-6	283	1-18-1980	2	North Carolina
92	Pittman, Kavika	DE	6-6	273	10-9-1974	8	McNeese State
97	Rasmussen, Kemp	DE	6-3	255	5-25-1979	2	Indiana
93	Rucker, Mike	DE	6-5	275	2-28-1975	5	Nebraska
95	Walker, Rod	DT	6-3	320	2-4-1976	3	Troy State
96	Wallace, Al	DE	6-5	258	3-25-1974	4	Maryland

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
28	Branch, Colin	S	6-1	203	3-2-1980	1	Stanford
40	Cooper, Jarrod	S	6-1	210	3-31-1978	3	Kansas State
24	Floyd, Marcus	CB	5-9	188	10-12-1978	1	Indiana
31	Hampton, William	CB	5-10	190	3-7-1975	2	Murray State
27	Hawkins, Artrell	CB	5-10	190	11-24-1976	6	Cincinnati
24	Manning Jr., Ricky	CB	5-9	185	11-18-1980	1	UCLA
30	Minter, Mike	S	5-10	188	1-15-1974	7	Nebraska
21	Poteat, Hank	CB	5-9	192	8-30-1977	4	Pittsburgh
22	Shaw, Terrance	CB	6-1	200	1-11-1973	9	Stephen F. Austin
42	Tillman, Travares	S	6-1	190	10-8-1977	3	Georgia Tech
29	Wesley, Dante	CB	6-1	211	4-5-1979	2	Arkansas-Pine Bluff

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
52	Allen, Brian	LB	6-1	232	4-1-1978	3	Florida State
	Armstead, Jessie	LB	6-1	237	10-26-1970	11	Miami (FL)
50	Ciurciu, Vinny	LB	5-11	235	5-2-1980	1	Boston College
56	Kyle, Jason	LB	6-3	242	5-12-1972	7	Arizona State
55	Morgan, Dan	LB	6-2	233	12-19-1978	3	Miami (FL)
53	Short, Brandon	LB	6-3	253	7-11-1977	4	Penn State
54	Witherspoon, Will	LB	6-1	234	8-19-1980	2	Georgia

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Kasay, John	K	5-10	198	10-27-1969	12	Georgia
10	Sauerbrun, Todd	P	5-10	211	1-4-1973	9	West Virginia

NELL REDMOND/ AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	28	Gamble, Chris	CB	6-1	181	3-11-83	Ohio State
2	30	Colbert, Keary	WR	5-10	193	5-21-82	USC
3	31	Wharton, Travelle	T	6-3	312	5-19-81	South Carolina
5	31	Carter, Drew	WR	6-3	200	9-5-81	Ohio State
6	31	Tufts, Sean	LB	6-3	236	3-26-82	Colorado
7	31	Gaines, Michael	TE	6-2	275	3-30-80	UCF

KENT SMITH

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Jake Delhomme
FB	Brad Hoover
RB	Stephen Davis
LT	Jordan Gross
LG	Travis Claridge
C	Jeff Mitchell
RG	Bruce Nelson
RT	Adam Meadows
TE	Kris Mangum
WR	Muhsin Muhammad
WR	Steve Smith

DEFENSE

LE	Julius Peppers
DT	Brentson Buckner
DT	Kris Jenkins
RE	Mike Rucker
SLB	Mark Fields
MLB	Dan Morgan
WLB	Will Witherspoon
LCB	Ricky Manning
RCB	Artrell Hawkins
SS	Mike Minter
FS	Colin Branch

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Todd Sauerbrun
K	John Kasay
PR	Steve Smith
KR	Rod Smart

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Green Bay	
Sept. 13	9:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 2 @ Kansas City	
Sept. 19	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 3 OPEN DATE

WEEK 4 vs. Atlanta	
Oct. 3	4:05
W / L	Score:

WEEK 5 @ Denver	
Oct. 10	4:15
W / L	Score:

WEEK 6 @ Philadelphia	
Oct. 17	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 7 vs. San Diego	
Oct. 24	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 8 @ Seattle	
Oct. 31	4:05
W / L	Score:

WEEK 9 vs. Oakland	
Nov. 7	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 10 @ San Francisco	
Nov. 14	4:15
W / L	Score:

WEEK 11 vs. Arizona	
Nov. 21	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 12 vs. Tampa Bay	
Nov. 28	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 13 @ New Orleans	
Dec. 5	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 14 vs. St. Louis	
Dec. 12	4:15
W / L	Score:

WEEK 15 @ Atlanta	
Dec. 18	8:30
W / L	Score:

WEEK 16 @ Tampa Bay	
Dec. 26	1:00
W / L	Score:

WEEK 17 vs. New Orleans	
Jan. 2	1:00
W / L	Score:

All times Eastern

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 3 2003 RECORD: 8-8

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Sam Gash, RB** (BUF)
- **Aaron Stecker, RB** (TB)
- **Brian Young, DT** (STL)
- **Jamar Nesbit, OL** (JAX)
- **Jason Craft, CB** (trade, JAX)

STADIUM FACTS

Louisiana Superdome

Capacity: **68,390** Turf: **Artificial**
Tickets: **504-731-1700**
Web site: **www.neworleanssaints.com**

Avg. Attendance **68,612**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **100.3**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$43.87**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$20.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.00 / 24oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.00 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

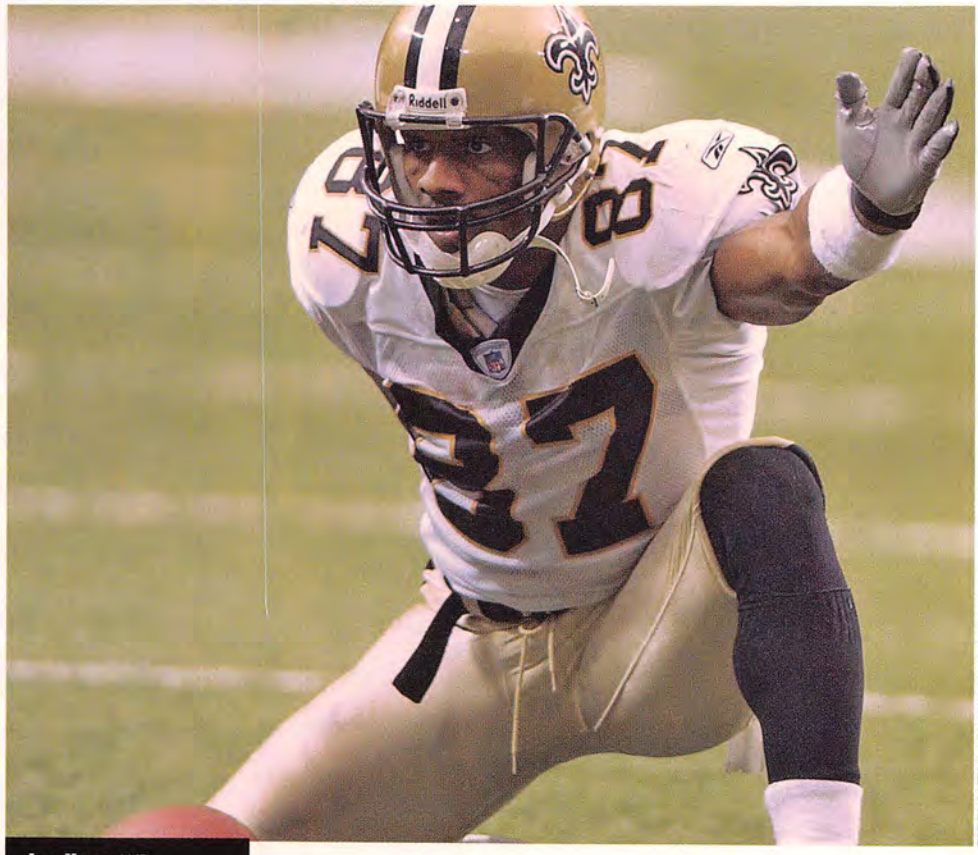
QUICK HITS

FACT: New Orleans coach Jim Haslett was voted *Associated Press* Defensive Rookie of the Year in 1979 as a member of the Buffalo Bills.

STAT: The Saints held eight opponents to fewer than 20 points last season after keeping just one foe below the mark in 2002.

LOOK IT UP: With nine consecutive 100-yard rushing games last season, Deuce McAllister tied Walter Payton (1985) and Fred Taylor (2000) for the third-longest streak of all time.

THE COUNT:
2,157 – Franchise-record yards from scrimmage for Deuce McAllister in '03.
106 – NFL-best third-down conversions last season, a club record.
16-3 – Saints' record when Joe Horn has 100-plus yards receiving.



Joe Horn, WR

TOP TO BOTTOM: LES BENTLEY; AL KOOISTRA

It's put-up-or-shut-up time for Haslett as Saints enter pressure-packed season for coach

Anything less than playoffs won't be accepted by brass

Jim Haslett was the toast of New Orleans after taking the Saints to the playoffs as a rookie head coach in 2000. After three mediocre seasons that featured some monumental collapses, Haslett is on the verge of *being* toast.

Perhaps no coach in the NFL enters the season on a hotter seat than Haslett, who despite having some tremendous talent to work with, has gone .500 while missing the playoffs in each of the last three seasons. Fans have soured on Haslett and anything less than a playoff berth probably won't be good enough for him to keep his job.

But there also is reason to believe that the Saints finally can live up to their potential and save Haslett's job. Quarterback Aaron Brooks is the key. He's an enormous physical talent. He has plenty of talent at the skill positions around him. But Brooks never has consistently played to his potential. If that can change, the Saints could be in the playoffs and Haslett could be the talk of Bourbon Street.

Offensive line

Grade: B

There was offseason movement in the middle of the line because the coaching staff believed the pocket too often was collapsing on Brooks. The key adjustment is sliding guard

He said it:

"We had opportunities all year that we just didn't take advantage of . . . We just didn't do what we needed to get it done."

—Deuce McAllister

LeCharles Bentley to center, where he'll replace veteran Jerry Fotenot. Montrae Holland and Kendyl Jacox will be the starting guards.

The outside of the line is in good hands with veteran Wayne Gandy guarding Brooks' blind side at left tackle and Victory Riley, coming off his best season, on the right side.

Quarterbacks

Grade: B

After Haslett, Brooks is the most unpopular figure in New Orleans. That became even more prevalent after the Saints let backup (and native Cajun) Jake Delhomme go and he took Carolina to the Super Bowl. But the Brooks bashing isn't fair.

Brooks has the talent to be an elite quarterback. He just needs better play from his offensive line and more consistency from his receivers. If that doesn't happen and Brooks struggles, Haslett may have to turn to backup Todd Bouman as a last-ditch effort to save his job.

Running backs

Grade: A

This is the strongest part of the offense. Deuce McAllister is one of the league's most complete backs. He can run inside and outside and he's a threat as a receiver. He has just started to reach his potential and that should relieve some of the pressure on Brooks.

Free agent Aaron Stecker was signed to be the change-of-pace back. Veteran Sam Gash or rookie Mike Karney should improve the blocking at fullback.

Receivers

Grade: B-

Joe Horn hasn't been consistent since signing a big contract in 2000, but he still has tons of talent. For Brooks to truly blossom he needs consistent production from Horn and Donte Stallworth. The coaching staff believes Stallworth finally is ready to play up to his potential and he'll likely replace Jerome Pathon in the starting lineup. But Pathon will still get plenty of playing time in three-receiver packages.

Tight end is a question mark, but not a problem. Ernie Conwell was the starter last year before suffering an injury. Boo Williams emerged in Conwell's absence and those two will battle for the starting job in training camp.

Defensive line

Grade: B+

This may be the strength of the team. Charles Grant will start on the left side and Darren Howard is back on the right side after missing half of last season with a broken wrist. Both are good pass rushers, but the Saints used their first-round pick on Will Smith. The plan is to use Smith as pass-rush specialist with Howard sliding inside in those situations.

The run defense was bad last year, but the coaches hope Johnathan Sullivan will improve after a disappointing rookie year. The addition of free agent Brian Young also should help the middle of the line. Willie Whitehead gives the line some quality depth.

Linebackers

Grade: C

This may be the team's weakest area. Middle linebacker is a huge question mark. Orlando Ruff is one possibility, but the coaches are hoping second-year pro Cie Grant can step up after a disappointing rookie season.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	339.9	11
Rushing	125.0	11
Passing	214.9	8
Scoring	340	14
Punt Returns	9.0	18
Kick Returns	21.2	19
Red Zone TD %	56.4	7T
Total Defense	327.1	18
Against Rush	140.1	27
Against Pass	187.1	8
Points Allowed	326	14
Interceptions	14	20T
Sacks	32	20
Turnover Diff.	-1	18T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
302	100	177	25

RED ZONE OFFENSE

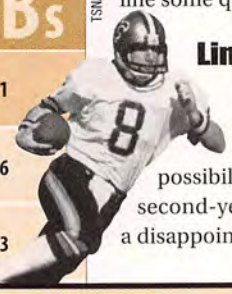
Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
39	194	22	13

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
11	25	3	2

SAINTS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **ARCHIE MANNING**
   Career Passing Yards: **23,911**
   Career TD Passes: **125**
2. **AARON BROOKS**
   Career Passing Yards: **12,466**
   Career TD Passes: **86**
3. **BOBBY HEBERT**
   Career Passing Yards: **21,683**
   Career TD Passes: **135**



TSN/ICON SMI

Saints looking for quarterback Brooks to end tease and show consistency they need to win

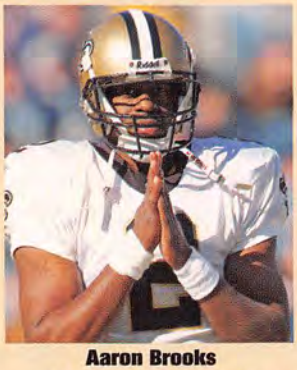
There are times when Aaron Brooks looks like the best quarterback in the NFL. Unfortunately for the Saints, there are times when he doesn't look like the best signal-caller on their roster.

Still, Brooks will begin the season as the starter with the Saints continuing to wait for a year free of the maddening inconsistency that leaves coaches shaking their heads.

In 2001 and 2002, Brooks spoiled excellent seasons with late collapses. Last year, he struggled to keep a grip on the ball, fumbling 14 times and losing 11. Yet whenever Brooks finds himself on the verge of being benched, he produces an eye-popping performance.

After fumbling four times in a 14-7 loss to Tampa Bay in early December, Brooks responded with a career-high five touchdowns in a rout of the Giants better known for Joe Horn's infamous cell phone call after a touchdown.

The Saints have all the makings of a potent offense. Last year's disappointing 8-8 record was due more to a defense ravaged by injuries than Brooks' troubles. Despite all the roster upheaval in Jim Haslett's four seasons as coach, Brooks has remained a constant, albeit an inconsistent one.



Aaron Brooks

Haslett has remained patient, perhaps because Brooks still has just three full seasons of starting experience and has refused to fuel a quarterback controversy, remaining a team player even as fans call for his benching.

"If it were to come down to that, I know it would be a move that would benefit our football team," Brooks said late last season.

Even with the meltdowns, Brooks has shown steady progress. He threw just eight interceptions last season and his completion percentage (59.1) was the highest of his career.

Brooks doesn't scramble as much as he used to, but he still shows the explosive athleticism that reminds people he came from the same part of Virginia that produced Allen Iverson and Michael Vick. Not bad for a fourth-round pick selected behind eight other quarterbacks in 1999.

At 28, Brooks is hardly a youngster. But like other late bloomers, he could yet enjoy a breakthrough season.

—Pete Williams

TOMASSO DEROSA

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 8, Lost 8

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	27-10	at Seattle
09/14	W	31-10	Houston
09/21	L	27-12	at Tennessee
09/28	L	55-21	Indianapolis
10/05	L	19-13	at Carolina
10/12	W	20-13	Chicago
10/19	W	45-17	at Atlanta
10/26	L	23-20 (OT)	Carolina
11/02	W	17-14	at Tampa Bay
11/16	W	23-20 (OT)	Atlanta
11/23	L	33-20	at Philadelphia
11/30	W	24-20	at Washington
12/07	L	14-7	Tampa Bay
12/14	W	45-7	New York Giants
12/21	L	20-19	at Jacksonville
12/28	W	13-7	Dallas

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
McAllister	351	1641	4.7	76t	8
Brooks	54	175	3.2	15	2
K. Carter	19	72	3.8	31	1
L. Smith	11	61	5.5	17	0
Horn	2	15	7.5	13	0
Fenderson	4	14	3.5	6	0
McAfee	1	13	13.0	13	0
Carney	1	3	3.0	3	0
Stallworth	1	3	3.0	3	0
M. Lewis	1	2	2.0	2	0
Bouman	3	1	0.3	2	0
Saints	**448**	**2000**	**4.5**	**76t**	**11**
Opponents	**480**	**2241**	**4.7**	**69t**	**12**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Horn	78	973	12.5	50t	10
McAllister	69	516	7.5	39	0
Pathon	44	578	13.1	40	4
B. Williams	41	436	10.6	31t	5
Conwell	26	290	11.2	32	2
Stallworth	25	485	19.4	76t	3
M. Lewis	12	226	18.8	39	1
Rasby	6	55	9.2	17	0
T. Smith	6	28	4.7	8	0
Gardner	3	29	9.7	11	0
K. Carter	1	11	11.0	11	0
D. Lewis	1	7	7.0	7	0
Fenderson	1	5	5.0	5	0
L. Smith	1	2	2.0	2	0
Saints	**314**	**3641**	**11.6**	**76t**	**25**
Opponents	**264**	**3164**	**12.0**	**79t**	**20**

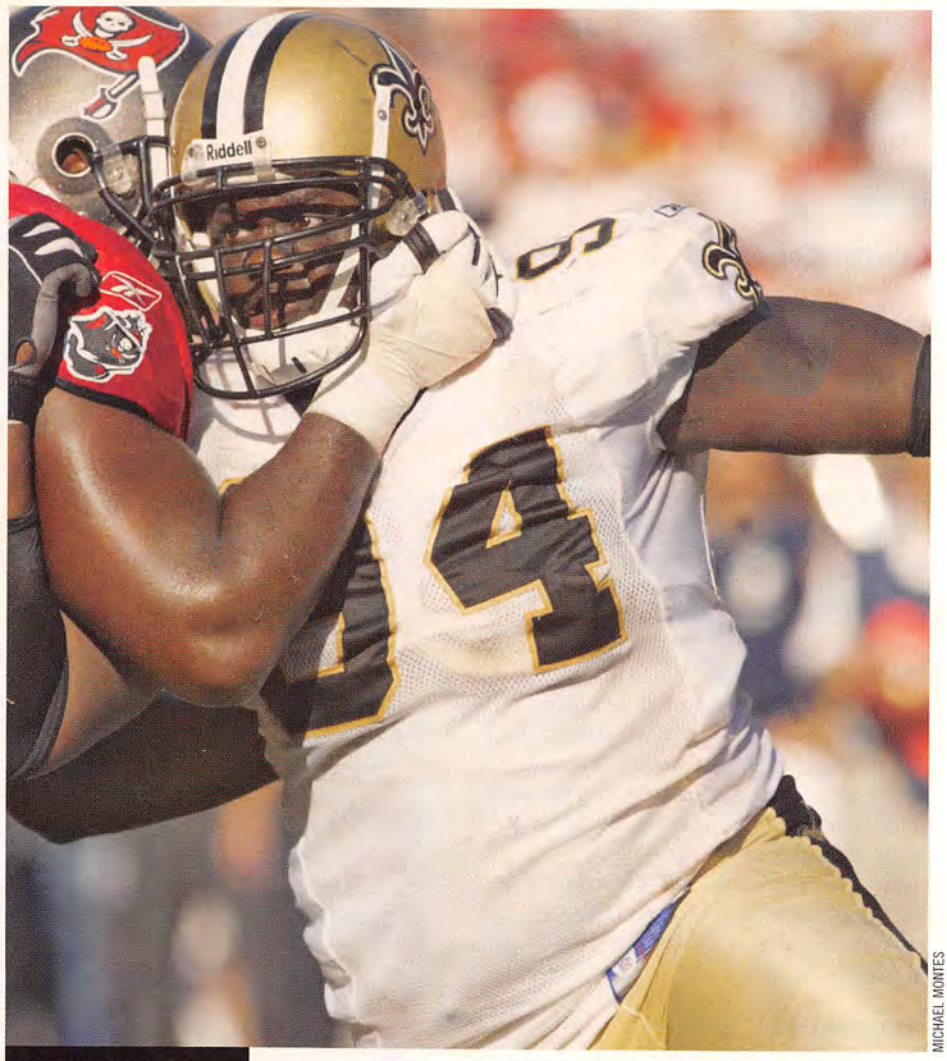
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Brooks	518	306	3546	24	8
Bouman	13	7	81	1	0
McAllister	2	0	0	0	0
Horn	1	1	14	0	0
Saints	**535**	**314**	**3641**	**25**	**8**
Opponents	**485**	**264**	**3164**	**20**	**14**

SACKS

Ch. Grant 10.0, Whitehead 5.5, Howard 5.0, Jackson 3.5, Bellamy 1.0, D. Carter 1.0, Hodge 1.0, D. Smith 1.0, K. Smith 1.0, Sullivan 1.0, Thomas 1.0

Saints 32.0, Opponents 36.0

t=touchdown



MICHAEL MONTES

Charles Grant, DE

Strongside linebacker Sedrick Hodge also needs to improve against the run and weakside linebacker Derrick Rogers is only adequate.

Defensive backs — Grade: C+

The arrival of Tebucky Jones last year came with a lot of hype, but he struggled in coverage and as a tackler. The coaching staff has made improving Jones' play an offseason priority, but it remains to be seen what the results will be. Veteran Jay Bellamy, the team's defensive MVP last season, will be the other starting safety.

Fred Thomas has one cornerback job locked up while steady and underrated veteran Ashley Ambrose will compete with free-agent pickup Jason Craft for the other starting job. The loser will be the nickel back.

Special teams — Grade: B

Michael Lewis was only ordinary in the return game after a spectacular 2002 season. The team brought in Stecker to prevent teams from kicking away from Lewis.

Veteran kicker John Carney is almost automatic from within 45 yards, but struggles with long kicks. Punter Mitch Berger is coming off an excellent season, but needs better play from the coverage units.

Front office — Grade: C+

Haslett, General Manager Mickey Loomis and Director of Player Personnel Rick Mueller are supposed to be a three-headed, decision-making team. Haslett may have had more power earlier in his tenure, but a system of checks and balances has been put in place. That may be one reason why the team wasn't overly active in free agency this year.

Bottom line

There's no question this is a make-or-break year for Haslett. He either makes the playoffs or he's out of a job. But there certainly is enough talent to save him. If Brooks can put it all together and the Saints can avoid off-field controversies that have spoiled recent seasons, there's no reason the Saints can't make the playoffs.

FINAL GRADE **87**

SAINTS ROSTER

Jim Haslett, head coach

Hubbard Alexander, receivers; **Dave Atkins**, running backs; **Joe Baker**, secondary; **John Beake**, off. admin. asst.-quality control; **Greg Brown**, asst. secondary-cornerbacks; **Sam Clancy**, def. line; **Al Everest**, special teams; **John Henry**, off. line; **Ty Knott**, def. asst.-quality control; **Danny Langsdorf**, asst. wide receivers; **Mike McCarthy**, off. coord.; **John Misciagna**, off. asst.-quality control; **Winston Moss**, linebackers; **Bob Palcic**, tight ends; **Mike Sheppard**, quarterbacks; **Rick Venturi**, def. coord.

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Bouman, Todd	QB	6-2	229	8-1-1972	3	St. Cloud State
2	Brooks, Aaron	QB	6-4	205	3-24-1976	4	Virginia
14	O'Sullivan, J.T.	QB	6-2	220	8-25-1979	0	California-Davis

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
65	Bentley, LeCharles	G	6-2	299	11-7-1979	2	Ohio State
71	Folau, Spencer	T	6-5	315	4-5-1973	7	Idaho
72	Gandy, Wayne	T	6-4	308	2-10-1971	10	Auburn
61	Holland, Montrae	G	6-2	333	5-21-1980	1	Florida State
47	Houser, Kevin	C	6-2	250	8-23-1977	4	Ohio State
64	Jacox, Kendyl	C	6-2	330	6-10-1975	6	Kansas State
	Nesbit, Jamar	G	6-4	329	12-17-1976	5	South Carolina
68	Riley, Victor	T	6-5	328	11-4-1974	6	Auburn
78	Stinchcomb, Jon	T	6-5	302	8-27-1979	1	Georgia
70	Wagner, Terence	C	6-2	290	5-26-1979	0	Sacramento State

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
22	Banks, Tavian	RB	5-10	208	2-17-1974	2	Iowa
	Gash, Sam	RB	6-1	242	3-7-1969	12	Penn State
27	Jenkins, Ronney	RB	5-11	185	5-25-1977	4	Northern Arizona
26	McAllister, Deuce	RB	6-1	221	12-27-1978	3	Mississippi
36	Smith, Lamar	RB	5-11	230	11-29-1970	10	Houston
	Stecker, Aaron	RB	5-10	205	11-13-1975	4	Western Illinois

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
83	Black, Nathan	WR	6-1	190	6-20-1978	1	Northwestern State
85	Conwell, Ernie	TE	6-2	265	8-17-1972	8	Washington
82	Crowell, Germane	WR	6-3	216	9-13-1976	5	Virginia
44	Curley, Dan	TE	6-4	254	4-25-1978	1	Eastern Washington
49	Draper, Shawn	TE	6-3	275	7-5-1979	0	Alabama
88	Gardner, Talman	WR	6-1	205	3-10-1980	1	Florida State
81	Hilton, Zachary	TE	6-8	262	7-2-1980	1	North Carolina
87	Horn, Joe	WR	6-1	206	1-16-1972	8	Itawamba J.C.
89	Lewis, Derrick	WR	6-2	185	10-30-1975	2	San Diego State
84	Lewis, Michael	WR	5-8	165	11-14-1971	3	None
18	McGeoghan, Phil	WR	6-3	200	7-8-1979	1	Maine
80	Pathon, Jerome	WR	6-1	182	12-16-1975	6	Washington
83	Stallworth, Donte'	WR	6-1	197	11-10-1980	2	Tennessee
82	Williams, Boo	TE	6-4	270	6-22-1979	3	Arkansas

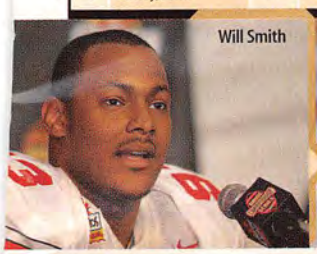
#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
99	Allen, Kenderick	DT	6-6	318	9-14-1978	1	LSU
92	Bryant, Tony	DE	6-6	275	9-3-1976	4	Florida State
94	Grant, Charles	DE	6-3	282	9-3-1978	2	Georgia
95	Green, Howard	DT	6-2	320	1-12-1979	2	LSU
93	Howard, Darren	DE	6-3	281	11-19-1976	4	Kansas State
90	Smith, Kenny	DT	6-4	295	9-8-1977	3	Alabama
97	Sullivan, Johnathan	DT	6-3	313	1-21-1981	1	Georgia
98	Whitehead, Willie	DE	6-3	285	1-26-1973	5	Auburn
96	Williams, Melvin	DE	6-2	269	2-2-1979	1	Kansas State
66	Young, Brian	DT	6-2	290	7-8-1977	4	UTEP

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
33	Ambrose, Ashley	CB	5-11	190	9-17-1970	12	Mississippi Valley
20	Bellamy, Jay	S	5-11	200	7-8-1972	10	Rutgers
47	Brooks, Ahmad	CB	5-8	180	3-13-1980	1	Texas
35	Brown, Fakhir	CB	5-11	192	9-21-1977	4	Grambling
	Craft, Jason	CB	5-10	176	2-13-1976	5	Colorado State
29	Craver, Keyuo	CB	5-10	195	8-22-1980	2	Nebraska
37	Gleason, Steve	S	5-11	215	3-19-1977	4	Washington State
28	Harper, Deveron	CB	5-11	187	11-15-1977	3	Notre Dame
34	Jones, Tebucky	S	6-2	218	10-6-1974	6	Syracuse
40	Mitchell, Mel	S	6-1	220	2-10-1979	1	Western Kentucky
22	Thomas, Fred	CB	5-9	184	9-11-1973	8	Tennessee-Martin

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Allen, James	LB	6-2	240	11-11-1979	2	Oregon State
58	Grant, Cie	LB	6-1	228	11-27-1979	1	Ohio State
52	Hodge, Sedrick	LB	6-4	244	9-13-1978	3	North Carolina
53	Knight, Roger	LB	6-1	245	10-11-1978	3	Wisconsin
59	Rodgers, Derrick	LB	6-1	230	10-14-1971	7	Arizona State
56	Ruff, Orlando	LB	6-3	250	9-28-1976	5	Furman
54	Smith, Darrin	LB	6-1	236	4-15-1970	11	Miami (FL)

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Berger, Mitch	P	6-4	220	6-24-1972	9	Colorado
3	Carney, John	K	5-11	180	4-20-1964	16	Notre Dame

(L TO R): ICON SMI; JAMES D. SMITH/ICON SMI



DALE BARBEE

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Aaron Brooks
RB	Deuce McAllister
RB	Mike Karney
LT	Wayne Gandy
LG	Montrae Holland
C	LeCharles Bentley
RG	Kendyl Jacox
RT	Victor Riley
TE	Boo Williams
WR	Joe Horn
WR	Donte Stallworth

DEFENSE

LDE	Charles Grant
LDT	Johnathan Sullivan
RDT	Brian Young
RDE	Darren Howard
SLB	Sedrick Hodge
MLB	Cie Grant
WLB	Derrick Rogers
LCB	Ashley Ambrose
RCB	Fred Thomas
SS	Jay Bellamy
FS	Tebucky Jones

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Mitch Berger
K	John Carney
PR	Michael Lewis
KR	Michael Lewis

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	18	Smith, Will	DE	6-3	267	8-4-81	Ohio State
2	18	Henderson, Devery	WR	5-11	191	3-26-82	LSU
2	28	Watson, Courtney	LB	6-1	237	9-18-80	Notre Dame
5	7	Leisle, Rodney	DT	6-3	309	2-5-81	UCLA
5	24	Karney, Mike	RB	5-11	254	7-6-81	Arizona State
7	39	Bockwoldt, Colby	LB	6-1	230	4-14-81	Brigham Young

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Seattle	
Sept. 12	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 2 vs. San Francisco	
Sept. 19	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 3 @ St. Louis	
Sept. 26	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 4 @ Arizona	
Oct. 3	4:05
W / L	Score:
WEEK 5 vs. Tampa Bay	
Oct. 10	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 6 vs. Minnesota	
Oct. 17	8:30
W / L	Score:
WEEK 7 @ Oakland	
Oct. 24	4:15
W / L	Score:
WEEK 8 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 9 @ San Diego	
Nov. 7	4:05
W / L	Score:
WEEK 10 vs. Kansas City	
Nov. 14	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 11 vs. Denver	
Nov. 21	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 12 @ Atlanta	
Nov. 28	4:05
W / L	Score:
WEEK 13 vs. Carolina	
Dec. 5	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 14 @ Dallas	
Dec. 12	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 15 @ Tampa Bay	
Dec. 19	4:05
W / L	Score:
WEEK 16 vs. Atlanta	
Dec. 26	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 17 @ Carolina	
Jan. 2	1:00
W / L	Score:

All times Eastern

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 4 2003 RECORD: 7-9

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- Keith Burns, LB (DEN)
- Greg Comella, RB (HOU)
- Derrick Deese, OT (SF)
- Charlie Garner, RB (OAK)
- Jeff Gooch, LB (DET)
- Tommy Knight, CB (BAL)
- Dave Moore, TE (BUF)
- Matt O'Dwyer, G (CIN)
- Todd Steussie, OT (CAR)
- Matt Stinchcomb, C (OAK)
- Jamel White, RB (CLE)

STADIUM FACTS

Raymond James Stadium

Capacity: **65,657** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **813-879-2827**
Web site: **www.buccaneers.com**

Avg. Attendance **65,544**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **99.8**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$49.78**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$15.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$4.75**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.75 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.50 / 20oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: The Buccaneers have notched four shutouts over the past two years after recording a total of four during their first 26 seasons in the league.

STAT: Since the start of the 1997 season, Tampa Bay has allowed an NFL-low 1,802 points. Miami ranks second with 2,006.

LOOK IT UP: Brad Johnson has completed at least 60 percent of his pass attempts in eight straight seasons, tying Joe Montana and Steve Young for the NFL's all-time best streak.

Gruden's gambling that his way (or the highway) will return Bucs to prominence

Tampa Bay looking more and more like the Oakland of old

Take a strong case of Super Bowl hangover. Then, throw in a feuding coach and general manager, a feuding coach and wide receiver, plus a slew of injuries.

That's a formula for disaster, and that's precisely what happened to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers last season. After winning Super Bowl XXXVII, the Bucs fell hard into mediocrity. Big-name players (Warren Sapp) slumped and pouted (Keyshawn Johnson), others (John Lynch, Brian Kelly and Mike Alstott) suffered significant injuries while coach Jon Gruden and General Manager Rich McKay had an ugly power struggle that became a major distraction as the season went on.

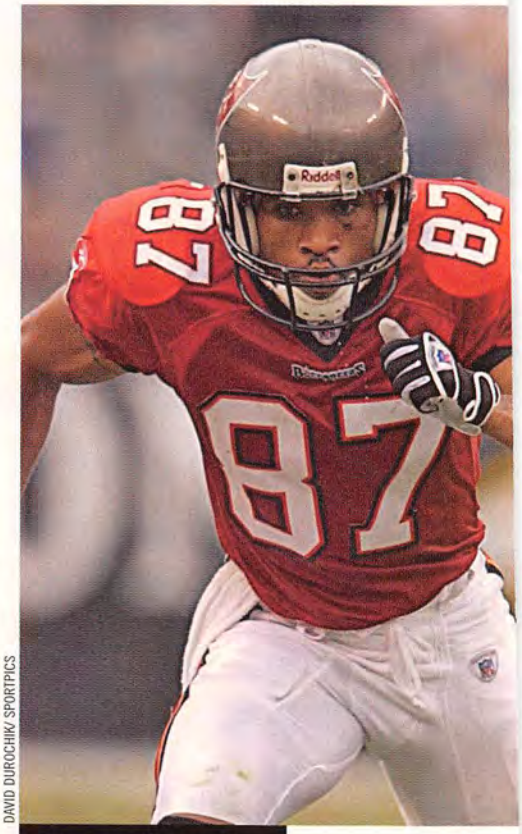
But the struggle is over and all the power now rests with Gruden, who will try to get the Bucs to bounce back. Gruden has cleaned house, getting rid of Sapp, Lynch and Johnson. Those were perhaps the three biggest names on the roster, but once Gruden got absolute power, he made it clear he wasn't afraid to blow up the team.

There were complete overhauls on the offensive line and special teams and some major changes just about everywhere else. Sapp, Lynch and Johnson were part of the most glorious time in franchise history. But Gruden believes the only way back to prominence is with a new nucleus that in reality is pretty old.

Offensive line — Grade: C

No unit will have more change than this group, which is good news after a disastrous performance last season. Center John Wade is likely to be the only starter remaining in the same position. Wade was perhaps the only bright spot on the line last year and the coaches believe he can be even better with a stronger supporting cast.

The team went out and signed a pair of veteran tackles to provide better protection for quarterback Brad Johnson. Derrick Deese (San Francisco) is likely to start on the left side and Todd Steussie (Carolina) probably will end up on the right side after spending his career on the left. That should be an upgrade over Roman Oben, who is likely to remain as a backup, and Kenyatta Walker, who had a horrible 2003. Deese and Steussie aren't dominant, but they should be able to give Johnson a bit more time to throw and their experience should help the team avoid the penalties that were so costly last year.



DAVID DUROCHIK/ SPORTPICS

Keenan McCardell, WR

Gruden brought in Matt Stinchcomb, who played for him in Oakland, and he'll compete with Jason Whittle and Matt O'Dwyer for the starting guard spots. Offensive coordinator Bill Muir is one of the best line coaches in the league and he has better talent to work with, but there will be an adjustment period.

Quarterbacks — Grade: C+

Fans put a lot of the blame for last season on Brad Johnson, but that wasn't fair. Johnson wasn't a much different quarterback than in the Super Bowl year. The reasons his interception total jumped and other numbers dropped were the poor play of the offensive line and an inconsistent running game. With significant upgrades made to both areas, the Bucs believe Johnson can return to his 2002 form.

The team signed veteran Brian Griese, but he may end up as the third quarterback.

Chris Simms made a good impression during his rookie preseason and in last year's practices. The coaches believe he has a bright future and Simms could end up as the No. 2. He is also viewed as an eventual replacement for Johnson and could get a chance if the veteran struggles.

Running backs

Grade: B

Gruden reached back for a player from his past and brought in Charlie Garner from Oakland. That move could be the most significant transaction for the offense. Garner is a tremendous receiver out of the backfield and that should give the offense more diversity. Garner's running style is a perfect fit for this offense. He's not a grinder, but he's capable of gaining yards in big chunks.

Gruden is a big believer in rotating running backs and that's why he signed Jamel White from Cleveland. White has a style similar to Garner's. Michael Pittman, the starter the last two years, will be a backup, but he's expected to serve a four-game suspension stemming from legal problems off the field.

The running game should also get a tremendous lift with the return of fullback Mike Alstott. He missed most of last season with a neck injury, which left the team without a short-yardage threat. Things got so bad after Alstott's injury that the Bucs often threw on third-and-one. That shouldn't be necessary this year.

Receivers

Grade: C+

Gruden made what seemed like a bold move when he took Keyshawn Johnson off the active roster late last season. But Johnson no longer was effective in the offense. The Bucs wanted a receiver who could stretch the field and that was accomplished by trading Johnson to Dallas for Joey Galloway. With Keenan McCardell, Joe Jurevicius, first-round pick Michael Clayton and Galloway, the Bucs finally have a mix of possession and speed receivers. Charles Lee, who got playing time late last year, can be a very good fifth receiver.

Tight end remains a bit of a question mark. The Bucs let Ken Dilger go and will use Rickey Dudley, who rarely has played up to his potential, as the starter. Dave Moore, who began his career with the Bucs, was re-signed and should be a reliable backup.

Defensive line

Grade: B

Much like Keyshawn Johnson, Sapp's present reputation wasn't nearly as good as his current production. That's why the Bucs let him walk. Anthony McFarland is younger and he'll move into Sapp's three-technique tackle position. That should be an upgrade because the coaches believe McFarland is ready to emerge as a star. Chartric Darby or Ellis Wyms will take McFarland's spot at nose tackle. Both young players have potential.

The Bucs signed former Oakland defensive tackle Darrell Russell, despite his long history of off-field problems. Russell likely will be a backup.

With Simeon Rice, the Bucs have a marquee pass rusher who has made huge improvements as a run defender. Greg Spires returns as a starter at the other defensive end, but the Bucs may try to work in DeWayne White, who spent his rookie year on the injured-reserve list.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	340.8	10
Rushing	103.0	24
Passing	237.8	6
Scoring	301	18
Punt Returns	6.9	26
Kick Returns	18.9	32
Red Zone TD %	55.0	10
Total Defense	279.1	5
Against Rush	109.8	13
Against Pass	169.4	3
Points Allowed	264	4
Interceptions	20	10
Sacks	36	8
Turnover Diff.	+2	10T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
307	86	190	31

RED ZONE OFFENSE

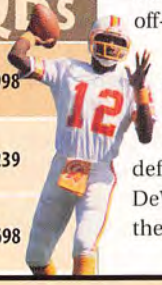
Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
40	188	22	12

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
5	27	4	4

BUCCANEERS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **DOUG WILLIAMS**
   Career Passing Yards: **16,998**
   Career TD Passes: **100**
2. **BRAD JOHNSON**
   Career Passing Yards: **22,239**
   Career TD Passes: **140**
3. **TRENT DILFER**
   Career Passing Yards: **16,698**
   Career TD Passes: **94**

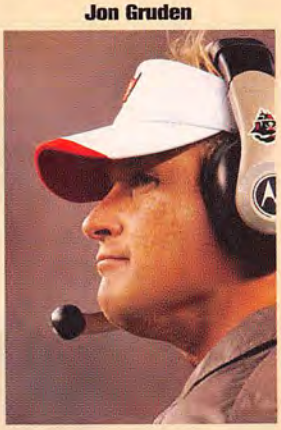


BETTMANN/CORBIS

Will Jon Gruden's hunger for veterans sink once-headstrong Tampa Bay Buccaneer ship?

When Jon Gruden led the Buccaneers to a Super Bowl title following the 2002 season, he was hailed as a boy genius for reaching the pinnacle after predecessor Tony Dungy had struggled to climb to the top of the mountain.

Jon Gruden



A year later, some wonder if Gruden is taking the Bucs over the cliff. As he did in Oakland, he's shown little regard for long-term salary-cap management, preferring expensive veteran players. If a player has legal problems, a cardinal sin under Dungy and former general manager Rich McKay, Gruden just shrugs.

Such disregard for character and the cap drove out the highly regarded McKay, a Buccaneer lifer since his days as a ball boy for his father John's expansion unit. Keyshawn Johnson, though hardly an innocent bystander, pointed the blame at Gruden for his own departure, labeling the coach a "used-car salesman."

Gruden struggles with player loyalty and even the truth. He blasted the media during the offseason for reports about his interest in Mark Brunell, then had to backpedal as the Bucs pursued the Jaguar free agent, all the while professing his admiration for Brad Johnson.

Rich McKay's replacement, former Raiders exec Bruce Allen, is viewed as more of a figurehead, with Gruden assuming full authority for personnel decisions.

Joel and Bryan Glazer, the sons of billionaire owner Malcolm Glazer, take an active role in the day-to-day management of the team, but have given Gruden a wide berth. Even after last year's disappointing 7-9 mark, the Bucs' first losing year since 1996, Gruden received a two-year contract extension through 2008.

In 2002, Gruden inherited a nucleus in its prime from Dungy. Last year, McKay was around to keep the coach from bringing in Emmitt Smith, Junior Seau and every other pricey, over-the-hill veteran he desired.

If the Bucs follow the lead of the New England Patriots and return to the Super Bowl after an off-year, Gruden will deserve more of the credit than he did two years ago. But if the team continues to struggle, he'll shoulder much of the blame for letting his ego sink a once-imposing pirate ship.

—Pete Williams

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 7, Lost 9

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/08	W	17-0	at Philadelphia
09/14	L	12-9 (OT)	Carolina
09/21	W	31-10	at Atlanta
10/06	L	38-35 (OT)	Indianapolis
10/12	W	35-13	at Washington
10/19	L	24-7	at San Francisco
10/26	W	16-0	Dallas
11/02	L	17-14	New Orleans
11/09	L	27-24	at Carolina
11/16	L	20-13	Green Bay
11/24	W	19-13	New York Giants
11/30	L	17-10	at Jacksonville
12/07	W	14-7	at New Orleans
12/14	W	16-3	Houston
12/20	L	30-28	Atlanta
12/28	L	33-13	at Tennessee

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Pittman	187	751	4.0	17	0
Jones	137	627	4.6	61	3
Stecker	37	125	3.4	15	0
Alstott	27	77	2.9	29	2
B. Johnson	25	33	1.3	13	0
S. King	4	20	5.0	12	0
Lee	2	14	7.0	8	0
K. Williams	1	2	2.0	2	0
Cook	1	-1	-1.0	-1	0
Buccaneers	**421**	**1648**	**3.9**	**61**	**5**
Opponents	**451**	**1756**	**3.9**	**47**	**6**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
McCardell	84	1174	14.0	76t	8
Pittman	75	597	8.0	68t	2
K. Johnson	45	600	13.3	39t	3
Lee	33	432	13.1	72	2
Jones	24	180	7.5	29	0
Dilger	22	244	11.1	48	1
Cook	20	120	6.0	19	1
Jurevicius	12	118	9.8	22	2
Alstott	10	83	8.3	17	0
Stecker	9	48	5.3	14t	1
K. Williams	7	114	16.3	43	0
Yoder	7	68	9.7	20	2
Dudley	7	42	6.0	9	1
Sapp	4	39	9.8	18	2
Shepherd	4	38	9.5	14	0
Barlow	3	27	9.0	13	1
Heller	2	15	7.5	11	1
Barnes	1	6	6.0	6	0
Buccaneers	**369**	**3941**	**10.7**	**76t**	**27**
Opponents	**274**	**2944**	**10.7**	**75t**	**16**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
B. Johnson	570	354	3811	26	21
S. King	22	15	130	1	1
Buccaneers	**592**	**369**	**3941**	**27**	**22**
Opponents	**475**	**274**	**2944**	**16**	**20**

SACKS

Rice 15.0, Sapp 5.0, Spires 3.5, McFarland 2.5, Darby 2.0, Wyms 2.0, Barber 1.5, Brooks 1.0, Pinkney 1.0, Webster 1.0, Lynch 0.5

Buccaneers 36.0, Opponents 23.0

t=touchdown

Linebackers

Grade: B

With Sapp and Lynch gone, Derrick Brooks is the only remaining member of the Super Bowl nucleus. But Brooks remains at the top of his game. He still has the speed to go sideline to sideline from the weakside and will be among the team leaders in tackles. He and middle linebacker Shelton Quarles are the veteran leaders of this defense. The Bucs signed Denver free agent Ian Gold, one of the league's fastest linebackers, to play the strongside. Former starter Ryan Nece will be a backup. Third-round pick Marquis Cooper could push for playing time.

But there is a big drop-off from the starters and Cooper to the backups after the departures of Dwayne Rudd and Nate Webster. Jeff Gooch and Keith Burns were signed in the offseason, but their strength is as special-teams players.

Secondary

Grade: C+

Lynch was the most popular player in franchise history, but his age and salary-cap figure prompted his release. His leadership will be missed, but the team believes Jermaine Phillips has the physical skills to develop into a top-notch safety. He'll be paired with free safety Dwight Smith, whose transition to the position was slowed when injuries to others forced him to play a lot at cornerback last year.

Ronde Barber remains one of the league's better cornerbacks and should get a boost with the return of Brian Kelly from injury. Barber and Kelly give the Bucs one of the top cornerback tandems in the league. Free agent Mario Edwards will take over as the nickel back.

Special teams

Grade: D

These units were a disaster last season, and punter Tom Tupa, the lone bright spot, signed with Washington. The team was forced to stick with Martin Gramatica because so much money is tied up in him. There's hope that Gramatica, who lost his confidence and struggled with technique, can regain his form. If that doesn't happen, the Bucs can't afford to be patient for too long.

The Bucs signed punter Josh Bidwell (Green Bay), who should be an adequate replacement for Tupa. The coverage units should be improved with the addition of Gooch and Burns, who make plenty of tackles. The return game will go through major transition, with Brandon Bennett, Frank Murphy and Marcus Knight likely to play key roles.

Management

Grade: C

Gruden won the power struggle and the pressure now is on him and new general manager Bruce Allen. McKay was the voice of reason, often hesitant to throw big money at veteran free agents. That philosophy has changed. Allen and Gruden are taking the same approach they did when they were with the Raiders. They believe they have to win now and deal with the future later.

That philosophy is even more practical because the trades to get Keyshawn Johnson and Gruden cost the team premium draft picks and the Bucs haven't added an impact player through the draft in several years. Allen and Gruden made bold moves by letting Lynch and Sapp walk, but they better hope the veterans they brought in still have some productivity left.

Simeon Rice, DE

Bottom line

It's all or nothing because the lack of top draft picks in recent years has left this team without any emerging stars. Players like Brooks and Barber are still very good, but they won't be forever. The veteran free agents have to produce instantly.

If they do, the Bucs could return to prominence very quickly because Gruden is an excellent coach. If those free agents show their age, a repeat of last season is entirely possible. If the Bucs struggle again, Gruden, who was seemingly invincible a couple of years ago, could be on the hot seat because he has put himself on an island by building the team exclusively his way.

FINAL GRADE **83**

BUCCANEERS ROSTER

Jon Gruden, head coach

Joe Barry, LBs; **Jeremy Bates,** off. quality control; **Richard Bisaccia,** special teams; **Jay Gruden,** off. asst.; **Monte Kiffin,** def. coord.; **Richard Mann,** WRs; **Rod Marinelli,** asst. head coach-def. line; **Raheem Morris,** def. asst.; **Bill Muir,** off. coord.; **Jim Pyne,** off. quality control; **Art Valero,** TEs; **Kyle Shanahan,** off. quality control; **John Shoop,** quarterbacks; **Mike Tomlin,** def. backs

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
17	Garrett, Jason	QB	6-2	205	3-28-1966	9	Princeton
	Griese, Brian	QB	6-3	215	3-18-1975	6	Michigan
14	Johnson, Brad	QB	6-5	226	9-13-1968	10	Florida State
2	Simms, Chris	QB	6-4	220	8-29-1980	0	Texas

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
66	Benjamin, Ryan	C	6-1	242	11-11-1977	3	South Florida
67	Breedlove, Kevin	G	6-3	315	6-25-1980	1	Georgia
53	Claxton, Ben	C	6-2	301	7-30-1980	0	Mississippi
60	Coleman, Cosey	G	6-4	322	10-27-1978	4	Tennessee
69	Davis, Anthony	T	6-4	329	3-27-1980	0	Virginia Tech
63	Deese, Derrick	T	6-3	289	5-17-1970	10	Southern California
71	Jenkins, Kerry	G	6-5	305	9-6-1973	7	Troy State
62	King, Austin	C	6-5	303	4-11-1981	0	Northwestern
78	Mahan, Sean	G	6-3	301	5-28-1980	1	Notre Dame
	O'Dwyer, Matt	G	6-5	305	9-1-1972	9	Northwestern
72	Oben, Roman	T	6-4	305	10-9-1972	8	Louisville
	Steussie, Todd	T	6-6	308	12-1-1970	10	California
	Stinchcomb, Matt	G	6-6	310	6-3-1977	4	Georgia
76	Wade, John	C	6-5	299	1-25-1975	6	Marshall
67	Walker, Kenyatta	T	6-5	302	2-1-1979	3	Florida
65	Whittle, Jason	G	6-4	305	3-7-1975	6	Southwest Missouri St.
74	Ziemann, Chris	T	6-7	315	9-20-1976	1	Michigan

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
40	Alstott, Mike	RB	6-1	248	12-21-1973	8	Purdue
36	Bennett, Brandon	RB	5-11	220	2-3-1973	5	South Carolina
45	Comella, Greg	RB	6-1	248	7-29-1975	6	Stanford
43	Cook, Jameel	RB	5-10	237	2-8-1979	3	Illinois
33	Dyer, Deon	RB	5-11	255	10-2-1977	3	North Carolina
	Garner, Charlie	RB	5-10	190	2-13-1972	10	Tennessee
32	Pittman, Michael	RB	6-1	218	8-14-1975	6	Fresno State
36	Taylor, Tony	RB	5-9	191	3-9-1978	1	Northwestern State
30	White, Jamel	RB	5-9	222	2-11-1978	4	South Dakota

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
85	Dilger, Ken	TE	6-5	250	2-2-1971	9	Illinois
88	Dudley, Rickey	TE	6-6	255	7-15-1972	8	Ohio State
83	Farmer, Danny	WR	6-3	215	5-21-1977	3	UCLA
84	Galloway, Joey	WR	5-11	197	11-20-1971	9	Ohio State
89	Heller, Will	TE	6-6	250	2-28-1981	1	Georgia Tech
83	Jurevicius, Joe	WR	6-5	230	12-23-1974	6	Penn State
83	Knight, Marcus	WR	6-1	180	6-19-1978	2	Michigan
82	Lee, Charles	WR	6-2	210	11-19-1977	4	Central Florida
87	McCardell, Keenan	WR	6-1	191	1-6-1970	12	UNLV
	Moore, Dave	TE	6-2	250	11-11-1969	12	Pittsburgh
84	Morris, Sylvester	WR	6-3	212	10-6-1977	1	Jackson State
83	Murphy, Frank	WR	6-1	200	2-11-1977	3	Kansas State
3	Shepherd, Edell	WR	6-1	175	5-18-1980	1	San Jose State
9	Skaggs, Justin	WR	6-2	200	4-22-1979	1	Evangel

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
99	Cowsette, Delbert	DT	6-1	287	9-3-1977	2	Maryland
91	Darby, Chartric	DT	6-1	270	10-22-1975	3	South Carolina State
75	Gregory, Damian	DT	6-2	305	1-21-1977	2	Illinois State
92	McFarland, Anthony	DT	6-1	300	12-18-1977	5	LSU
61	Pinkney, Cleveland	DT	6-1	300	9-14-1977	1	South Carolina
97	Rice, Simeon	DE	6-5	268	2-24-1974	8	Illinois
96	Russell, Darrell	DT	6-5	325	5-27-1976	6	Southern California
98	Smith, Corey	DE	6-2	250	11-2-1979	2	North Carolina State
94	Spires, Greg	DE	6-1	265	8-12-1974	6	Florida State
90	White, Dewayne	DE	6-2	273	10-19-1979	1	Louisville
95	Wilson, Reinard	DE	6-2	270	12-17-1973	6	Florida State
96	Wyms, Ellis	DE	6-3	279	4-12-1979	3	Mississippi State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
20	Barber, Ronde	CB	5-10	184	4-7-1975	7	Virginia
24	Cox, Torrie	CB	5-9	181	10-29-1980	0	Pittsburgh
27	Edwards, Mario	CB	6-1	199	12-1-1975	4	Florida State
21	Frost, Scott	S	6-3	218	1-4-1975	5	Nebraska
38	Howell, John	S	5-11	210	4-28-1978	3	Colorado State
35	Ivy, Corey	CB	5-8	183	3-29-1977	3	Oklahoma
25	Kelly, Brian	CB	5-11	193	1-14-1976	6	Southern California
22	Knight, Tom	CB	6-1	202	12-29-1974	6	Iowa
43	Pearson, Kalvin	CB	5-10	190	10-22-1978	1	Grambling State
23	Phillips, Jermaine	S	6-1	214	3-27-1979	2	Georgia
28	Robinson, Travaris	S	5-10	193	9-1-1981	1	Auburn
26	Smith, Dwight	S	5-10	201	8-13-1978	3	Akron
31	Wansley, Tim	CB	5-8	186	11-7-1979	2	Georgia
29	Whitaker, Ronyell	CB	5-9	196	3-19-1979	1	Virginia Tech

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
55	Brooks, Derrick	LB	6-1	235	4-18-1973	9	Florida State
	Burns, Keith	LB	6-2	235	5-16-1972	10	Oklahoma State
	Gooch, Jeff	LB	5-11	226	10-31-1974	8	Austin Peay
56	Nece, Ryan	LB	6-3	224	2-24-1979	2	UCLA
53	Quarles, Shelton	LB	6-1	225	9-11-1971	7	Vanderbilt
59	Thomas, Edward	LB	6-1	228	9-27-1974	3	Georgia Southern

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
9	Bidwell, Josh	P	6-3	220	3-13-1976	4	Oregon
7	Gramatica, Martin	K	5-8	170	11-27-1975	5	Kansas State
10	Jarrett, Craig	P	6-2	215	7-17-1979	1	Michigan State

BILL HABER/ AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

TOMASSO DEROSA

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Brad Johnson
FB	Mike Alstott
RB	Charlie Garner
LT	Derrick Deese
LG	Matt O'Dwyer
C	John Wade
RG	Matt Stinchcomb
RT	Todd Steussie
TE	Ricky Dudley
WR	Joey Galloway
WR	Keenan McCardell

DEFENSE

LE	Greg Spires
LT	Chartric Darby
RT	Anthony McFarland
RE	Simeon Rice
SLB	Ian Gold
MLB	Shelton Quarles
WLB	Derrick Brooks
LCB	Ronde Barber
RCB	Brian Kelly
SS	Jermaine Phillips
FS	Dwight Smith

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Josh Bidwell
K	Martin Gramatica
PR	Marcus Knight
KR	Marcus Knight

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	15	Clayton, Michael	WR	6-3	197	10-13-82	LSU
3	16	Cooper, Marquis	LB	6-2	213	3-11-82	Washington
4	15	Allen, Will	S	6-1	193	6-17-82	Ohio State
5	14	Terry, Jeb	G	6-5	311	4-10-81	North Carolina
6	16	Lawrie, Nate	TE	6-5	262	10-17-81	Yale
7	5	Jones, Mark	WR	5-9	185	11-3-80	Tennessee
7	27	Cramer, Casey	RB	6-2	235	1-5-82	Dartmouth
7	51	Williams, Lenny	CB	6-1	190	12-16-81	Southern Univ.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	@ Washington	
Sept. 12		1:00
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 2	vs. Seattle	
Sept. 19		4:05
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 3	@ Oakland	
Sept. 26		8:30
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 4	vs. Denver	
Oct. 3		4:15
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 5	@ New Orleans	
Oct. 10		1:00
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 6	@ St. Louis	
Oct. 18		9:00
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 7	vs. Chicago	
Oct. 24		1:00
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 8 OPEN DATE

WEEK 9	vs. Kansas City	
Nov. 7		1:00
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 10	@ Atlanta	
Nov. 14		1:00
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 11	vs. San Francisco	
Nov. 21		1:00
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 12	@ Carolina	
Nov. 28		1:00
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 13	vs. Atlanta	
Dec. 5		1:00
W	Score:	
L		

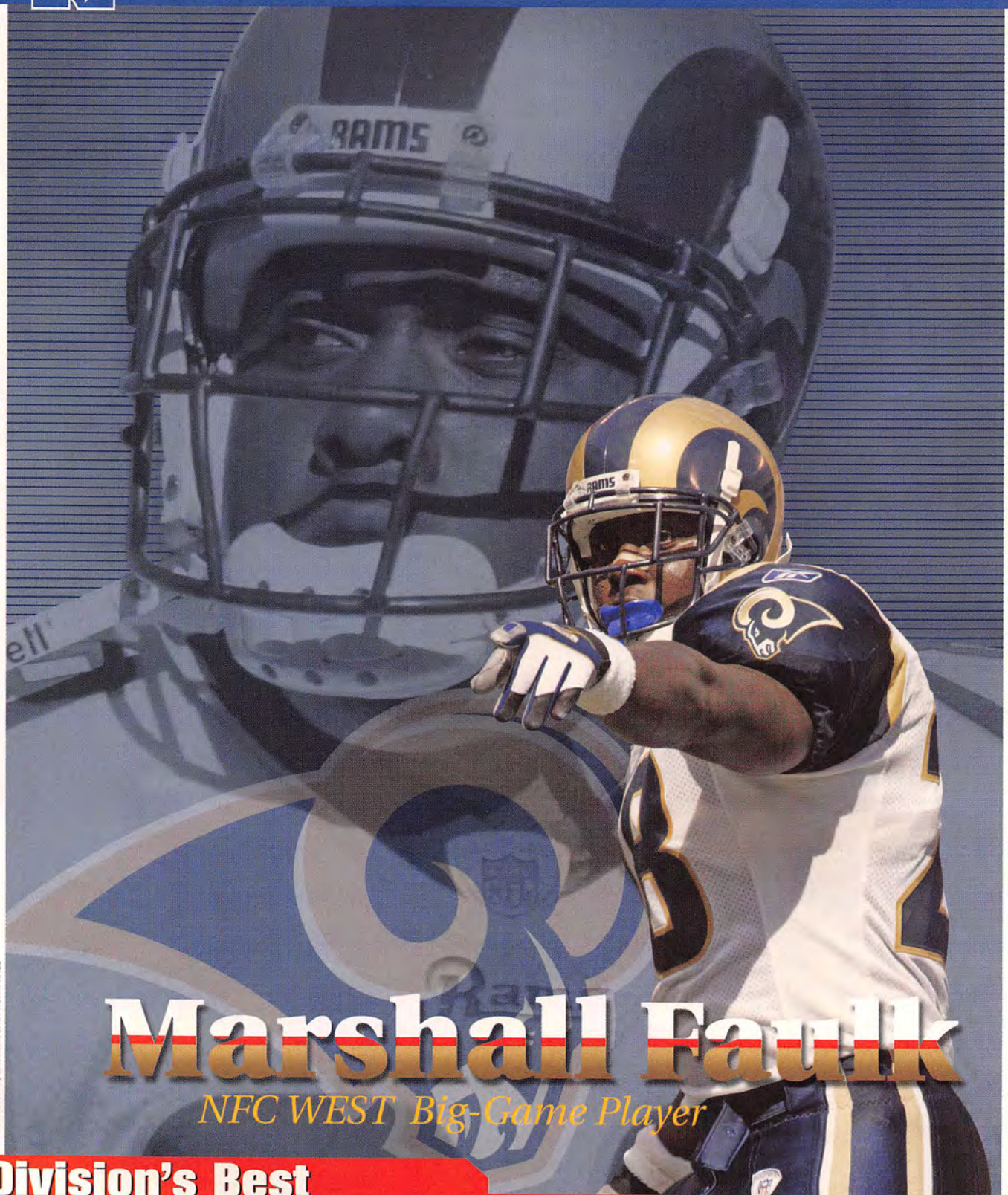
WEEK 14	@ San Diego	
Dec. 12		4:15
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 15	vs. New Orleans	
Dec. 19		4:05
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 16	vs. Carolina	
Dec. 26		1:00
W	Score:	
L		

WEEK 17	@ Arizona	
Jan. 2		4:05
W	Score:	
L		

All times Eastern



AL KOOISTRA; BACKGROUND: NORM HALL

Marshall Faulk

NFC WEST Big-Game Player

Division's Best

BIG-GAME PLAYER	RUSHER	RECEIVER	TACKLER	SPECIAL-TEAMS WARRIOR
Marshall Faulk, RB St. Louis	**Kevan Barlow, RB San Francisco**	**Torry Holt, WR St. Louis**	**Julian Peterson, LB San Francisco**	**Terry Jackson, FB San Francisco**
Has missed 11 starts the last two seasons and defensive coaches are glad.	With Garrison Hearst and Terrell Owens and Jeff Garcia gone, Barlow is ready to carry the load.	Emerged as No. 1 in league in catches and yardage.	This guy is all over the field, including the backfield.	A coach on field, he led team in tackles and recovered two fumbles.

Look for Holmgren's Seahawks to be the most offensive in a division full of offensive players

By Don Pierson, Chicago Tribune

Mike Martz and his St. Louis Rams won the West last year with Kurt Warner standing on the sidelines. This year, Martz will try to win it again with new faces in a division in transition.

That Martz won with newcomer Marc Bulger at quarterback gives hope to San Francisco's Dennis Erickson and new quarterback Tim Rattay and to Arizona's new coach Dennis Green and new quarterback Josh McCown.

It also makes Seattle's Mike Holmgren and the most experienced quarterback in the division, Matt Hasselbeck, the favorites.

It is a division of offense and, in April's NFL Draft, the Rams drafted the first running back in Oregon State's Steven Jackson and the Cardinals selected the first receiver in Pitt's Larry Fitzgerald. Only the Seahawks drafted for defense first.

1. SEATTLE SEAHAWKS page 170

If the free-agent additions of cornerback Bobby Taylor and defensive end Grant Wistrom help defensive coordinator Ray Rhodes bring the defense closer to the offense, the Seahawks should prevail. Draft picks Marcus Tubbs and Michael Boulware also are expected to start on defense.

After sneaking into last year's playoffs as a wild card, only to get knocked out in Green Bay, ex-Packers Holmgren and Hasselbeck are trying their best to get beyond Green Bay.

Winning on the road will be the Seahawks' first priority after a 2-6 away record cost them the division title last time.

2. ST. LOUIS RAMS page 174

Not only did Warner watch from the bench, superstar running back Marshall Faulk played only 11 games. Yet the Rams won 12, enhancing Martz's reputation as an innovative coach. The drafting of Jackson signals the eventual phasing out of Faulk.

Losing defensive coordinator Lovie Smith to Chicago means a retooling with Martz buddy Larry Marmie. Like Warner before him, Bulger must prove he can play at a high level consistently. At 35, Faulk must prove he's not finished.

The Rams also face the prospect of lining up without top defender Leonard Little, who's in trouble again with the law.

NORM HALL

This may finally be the season for Seattle fans.

3. SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS page 178

No team lost as much offense as Erickson did. The 'Niners actually finished ahead of the Rams in offensive yardage, yet will have to get along without quarterback Jeff Garcia, receivers Terrell Owens, Tai Streets and Jed Weaver, and running back Garrison Hearst.

Still fighting salary-cap woes, this team has to rely on its division-leading defense, also starting anew after losing coordinator Jim Mora Jr. to Atlanta.

Much depends on the continued development of Rattay, who was impressive in three starts last season.

4. ARIZONA CARDINALS page 182

Dennis Green has been out of it for two years. The Cardinals have been out of it for 58 years since winning their only title. Evidently undaunted, Green faces the same task that wilted so many predecessors: convincing his players they can compete despite big odds and small crowds.

This will take time, but what else is new in Arizona? Soon, a stadium, but not soon enough. Green is gutsy, saying he will be disappointed if his Cards don't reach the playoffs this year.

TEAMMATE	SENSE OF HUMOR	INTELLECT	SIDELINE STRATEGIST	FRONT-OFFICE EXECUTIVE
Mack Strong, FB Seattle	**Matt Hasselbeck, QB Seattle**	**Scott Gragg, OT San Francisco**	**Mike Holmgren, head coach Seattle**	**Jay Zygmunt, St. Louis**
If he ever retires, they ought to retire this honor with him.	He demonstrated his ability to keep teammates loose by predicting victory during the playoff coin flip in Green Bay.	Would like to run for political office in Montana. At 6-8, 315, any office he wants.	He's got quarterback Matt Hasselbeck thinking like he does.	Consistency enables Rams to contend year in and year out.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 1 2003 RECORD: 10-6

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Bobby Taylor, CB** (PHI)
- **Grant Wistrom, DE** (STL)
- **Brock Huard, QB** (IND)

STADIUM FACTS

Seahawks Stadium

Capacity: **67,000** Turf: **Artifical**
Tickets: **888-635-4295**
Web site: **www.seahawks.com**

Avg. Attendance **64,019**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **95.6**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$43.06**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$20.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.25**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.50 / 15oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.50 / 21oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Including both preseason and regular-season games, the Seahawks logged a league-high 31,976 air miles in 2003.

STAT: Shaun Alexander is the only player in the NFL to have scored at least 15 touchdowns in each of the last three regular seasons.

LOOK IT UP: In 2003, Matt Hasselbeck became the first Seattle quarterback to start all 16 regular-season games since Rick Mirer made 16 starts for the Seahawks as a rookie in 1993.

THE COUNT:

1986 – Year of Seattle's last 10-win season prior to 2003.

52 – NFL-leading points scored by Seattle in '03 on its first possession of games.

8-0 – Seahawks' first-ever perfect regular-season mark at home last year.

With weapons galore for Hasselbeck, now is the time for Holmgren's 'Hawks to win big

But Rhodes' improving defense must show it can produce

Mike Holmgren was supposed to win last year and he's supposed to win this year. He's supposed to win every year. In Seattle, he better get to it. Just making the playoffs isn't enough. The Seahawks got a taste of that last year but couldn't get ahead of St. Louis in the division race.

Defense was still the culprit, with the improved unit of Ray Rhodes still finishing only ahead of Arizona in the NFC West. That's one reason the Seahawks paid defensive end Grant Wistrom a $14 million signing bonus to jump from St. Louis. They also upgraded at cornerback, with Philadelphia's Bobby Taylor replacing departed Shawn Springs.

This is a division of offense, with the Seahawks, Rams and 49ers all ranked among the top nine in the league in moving the ball. The Rams are still the kings of getting into the end zone, however, which is something Holmgren must address.

"I think we have a chance now. I think if we can avoid injuries, I think we have a chance," Holmgren says. "We got back into the playoffs and competed pretty well against Green Bay and that experience in losing that tough game, that will help them."

Offensive line — Grade: A-

Still playing dangerously in their annual contract squabble with left tackle Walter Jones, the Seahawks nevertheless offer a solid, experienced bunch of blockers for quarterback Matt Hasselbeck and running back Shaun Alexander.

Jones and guard Steve Hutchinson form as good a left side as there is. Center Robbie Tobeck, right guard Chris Gray and right tackle Chris Terry also are solid. Except for Terry, they didn't miss a start, so they hope such luck continues. Floyd Womack is the No. 1 backup at tackle and guard. Wayne Hunter and rookie Sean Locklear provide depth.

Shaun Alexander, RB

Quarterbacks

Grade: A-

Hasselbeck is the man and his bravado during the overtime toss in Green Bay ("We're going to score.") is likely to be rewarded soon. Nobody is having more fun playing and few quarterbacks are more effective or have more weapons at their disposal. He is also the most experienced starting quarterback in a division with Marc Bulger, Tim Rattay and Josh McCown.

Although his season ended on an interception that the Packers' Al Harris returned for a touchdown, Hasselbeck's appetite for more has only increased. Trent Dilfer and newly re-signed Brock Huard provide excellent depth, by far the best in the division.

Running backs

Grade: A-

Alexander doesn't seem like the workhorse type. Yet he has averaged more than 300 carries the last three seasons and his 4.4 yards per carry last season was his best since becoming a starter. His 44 rushing touchdowns over three seasons also lead the NFC.

That kind of production enabled Alexander to increase his salary from a little over $500,000 to more than $3 million, so the next question is how he handles success. He is vital to the Seahawk hopes.

Mack Strong returns as a dependable and unselfish blocker, with Maurice Morris and Kerry Carter as change-of-pace backups for Alexander. Heath Evans and Chris Davis also return.

Receivers

Grade: A

Re-signing Darrell Jackson kept him from joining a free-agent frenzy at the position and also kept the Seahawks in possession of one of the best trios of receivers in the league.

Koren Robinson's numbers fell slightly as Jackson's increased, but both get plenty of action from Hasselbeck. If there's a more dependable and productive third receiver in the league than Bobby Engram, the Seahawks would like to meet him. Taco Wallace and Jerheme Urban are good second-year prospects.

Until Jerramy Stevens fulfills some potential, the tight end position is in the capable hands of Itula Mili, with Ryan Hannam returning from injury.

Defensive line

Grade: C

After losing starting tackles John Randle and Norman Hand, drafting Marcus Tubbs was imperative. He will join 12-game starter Cedric Woodard, with Rashad Moore also pushing to start and Rocky Bernard in reserve.

The Rams loved Wistrom, but not as much as the Seahawks. His work ethic is almost as valuable as his 7.5 sacks of 2003. He will allow Chike Okeafor to move to left end. Antonio Cochran and Brandon Mitchell are backups.

Linebackers

Grade: B

Chad Brown hopes a broken right foot that nagged him all last season is healed. He and Anthony Simmons give defensive coordinator Rhodes outstanding outside linebackers. Rhodes hopes second-year prospect Solomon Bates can replace departed Randall Godfrey in the middle. Orlando Huff and Isaiah Kacyvenski also have starting experience inside. Draft pick

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	351.7	6
Rushing	125.6	10
Passing	226.1	7
Scoring	404	7
Punt Returns	9.4	14
Kick Returns	20.9	22
Red Zone TD %	62.0	4
Total Defense	327.4	19
Against Rush	109.9	14
Against Pass	217.5	27
Points Allowed	327	15T
Interceptions	16	12T
Sacks	40	13
Turnover Diff.	-1	18T

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
338	121	190	27

RED ZONE OFFENSE

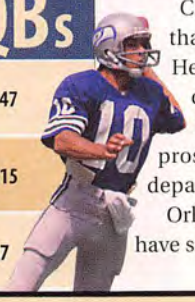
Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
50	259	31	14

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
17	27	4	2

SEAHAWKS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **DAVID KRIEG**
   Career Passing Yards: **38,147**
   Career TD Passes: **261**
2. **JIM ZORN**
   Career Passing Yards: **21,115**
   Career TD Passes: **111**
3. **MATT HASSELBECK**
   Career Passing Yards: **9,087**
   Career TD Passes: **50**



FINALSHOT/JRP

Hasselbeck's emergence no surprise to those who know him best

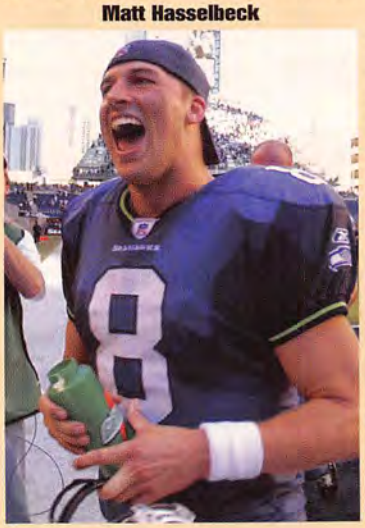
Even now, after a breakout 2003 season in which Matt Hasselbeck emerged as one of the NFL's top quarterbacks, there are some who wonder if he's a long-term solution for the Seattle Seahawks or just another flavor-of-the-month in the new NFL world of disposable quarterbacks.

He's a pretty good bet to have staying power. After directing the league's most productive offense the last nine games of 2002, he passed for a club-record 3,841 yards, 26 touchdown passes and an 88.8 QB rating last season, finishing in the top three in each category. Hasselbeck has also shown he's learned a few things about poise and late-game heroics from his two years as Brett Favre's understudy in Green Bay.

Last season Hasselbeck became the first quarterback to start all 16 games for the Seahawks since Rick Mirer in 1993 and brought an element of swagger to the position when he uttered "we want the ball, we're going to score" after winning the overtime coin flip against the Packers in the playoffs on Jan. 4.

No matter that Seattle lost that wild-card game, 33-27, at Green Bay, Hasselbeck matched up favorably against Favre, once again showing the potential to become the league's next big-time quarterback. It helps that he's played in the same basic offense in Green Bay and Seattle, has considerable support and, at 28, is still young by NFL quarterback standards.

Matt Hasselbeck



"Matt wasn't someone who was going to sit behind Brett Favre for his entire career," says Packers coach Mike Sherman. "At some point, he's going to end up being one of the great quarterbacks in the league."

That time could come soon. A Pro Bowl alternate last season, he earned a trip to Honolulu in February when Favre dropped out of the game. Hasselbeck likely will never replace Favre in Green Bay, but he's doing a fair impersonation in Seattle.

—Pete Williams

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 10, Lost 6

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	27-10	New Orleans
09/14	W	38-0	at Arizona
09/21	W	24-23	St. Louis
10/05	L	35-13	at Green Bay
10/12	W	20-19	San Francisco
10/19	W	24-17	Chicago
10/26	L	27-24	at Cincinnati
11/02	W	23-16	Pittsburgh
11/09	L	27-20	at Washington
11/16	W	35-14	Detroit
11/23	L	44-41 (OT)	at Baltimore
11/30	W	34-7	Cleveland
12/07	L	34-7	at Minnesota
12/14	L	27-22	at St. Louis
12/21	W	28-10	Arizona
12/27	W	24-17	at San Francisco

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Alexander	326	1435	4.4	55	14
Morris	38	239	6.3	43	0
Strong	37	174	4.7	21t	1
Hasselbeck	36	125	3.5	18	2
H. Evans	7	24	3.4	8	0
K. Robinson	4	15	3.8	16	0
Dilfer	2	-1	-0.5	0	0
Carter	3	-2	-0.7	1	0
Seahawks	**453**	**2009**	**4.4**	**55**	**17**
Opponents	**456**	**1759**	**3.9**	**50**	**9**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Jackson	68	1137	16.7	80t	9
K. Robinson	65	896	13.8	38t	4
Engram	52	637	12.3	34t	6
Mili	46	492	10.7	46t	4
Alexander	42	295	7.0	22	2
Strong	29	216	7.4	32	0
Stevens	6	72	12.0	26	0
Morris	4	32	8.0	13	1
Bannister	3	61	20.3	31t	1
H. Evans	2	34	17.0	20	0
Seahawks	**317**	**3872**	**12.2**	**80t**	**27**
Opponents	**343**	**3728**	**10.9**	**72t**	**24**

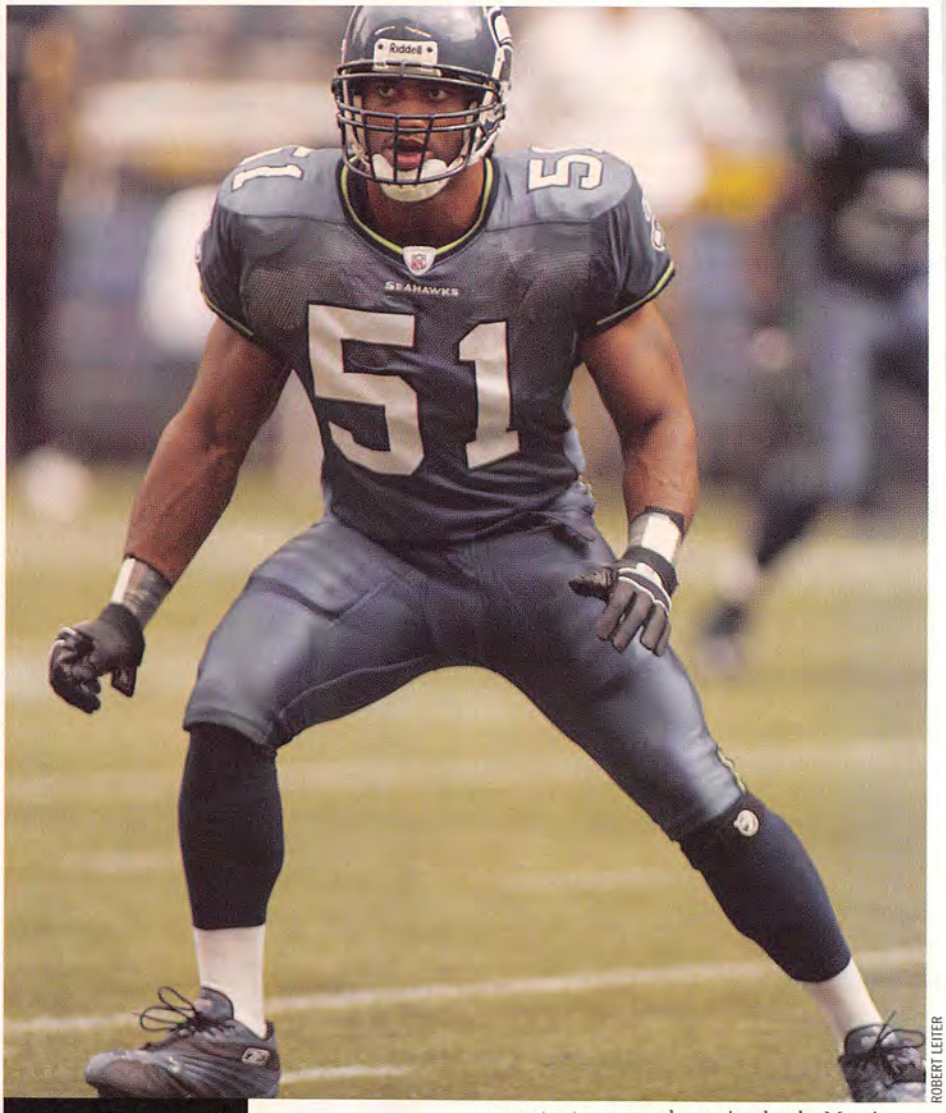
PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Hasselbeck	513	313	3841	26	15
Dilfer	8	4	31	1	1
Seahawks	**521**	**317**	**3872**	**27**	**16**
Opponents	**573**	**343**	**3728**	**24**	**16**

SACKS

Okeafor 8.0, C. Brown 7.0, Randle 5.5, King 3.0, Mitchell 3.0, Simmons 3.0, R. Bernard 2.0, Tongue 2.0, Springs 1.5, Cochran 1.0, Hand 1.0, Huff 1.0, Moore 1.0, Richard 1.0

Seahawks 40.0, Opponents 43.0

t=touchdown



ROBERT LEITER

Anthony Simmons, LB

Niko Koutouvides is also a possibility. The Seahawks didn't sign Godfrey until just before training camp last year and hope to find a comparable veteran.

Secondary

Grade: B

Undersized linebacker Michael Boulware was drafted to convert to strong safety, where the Seahawks hope he can replace departed Reggie Tongue. If he contributes as much as last year's rookies, cornerback Marcus Trufant and free safety Ken Hamlin, Rhodes will be ecstatic. But it will not be an easy adjustment for a rookie. Damien Robinson can play either safety spot.

The addition of Taylor from the Eagles and the return of experienced Ken Lucas more than makes up for the loss of former No. 1 pick Springs. Taylor is more consistent than Springs.

Special teams

Grade: B-

Josh Brown showed promise as a rookie, kicking the longest field goal of the season, 58 yards. Late draft pick Donnie Jones will push punter Tom Rouen. Engram is outstanding as a punt returner and running backs Morris and Carter will handle kickoff returns.

Management

Grade: B-

Although Holmgren's switch from dual roles to strictly coaching may have been overstated in the team's return to the playoffs, there is little doubt that what Holmgren does best is coach. There is all kinds of experience in the front office, probably still too many checks and balances.

Bottom line

A division title is in the making. Anything less would be a disappointment. The defense moved up from 28th to 19th last year. Another similar jump will do it.

The Seahawks also have to get better on the road, where they were 2-6 last season. With their first two games being at New Orleans and at Tampa Bay, they will have a chance to turn that around early.

FINAL GRADE **89**

SEAHAWKS ROSTER

Mike Holmgren, head coach

Teryl Austin, def. backs; **Dwaine Board**, def. line; **Nolan Cromwell**, wide receivers; **Gil Haskell**, off. coord.; **Jim Lind**, tight ends; **Clayton Lopez**, def. quality control; **John Marshall**, linebackers; **Mark Michaels**, special teams; **Stump Mitchell**, running backs; **Gary Reynolds**, off. asst.-quality control; **Ray Rhodes**, def. coord.; **Pete Rodriguez**, special teams coord.; **Zerick Rollins**, def. line.; **Jim Zorn**, quarterback/quality control; **Nolan Cromwell**, asst. off. line

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
4	Dilfer, Trent	QB	6-4	225	3-13-1972	10	Fresno State
8	Hasselbeck, Matt	QB	6-4	223	9-25-1975	5	Boston College
7	Huard, Brock	QB	6-4	232	4-15-1976	3	Washington
15	Wallace, Seneca	QB	5-11	196	8-06-1980	0	Iowa State

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
52	Darche, Jean-Philippe	C	6-1	246	2-28-1975	4	McGill
62	Gray, Chris	G	6-4	308	6-19-1970	11	Auburn
74	Hill, Matt	T	6-6	304	11-10-1978	2	Boise State
73	Hunter, Wayne	T	6-5	303	7-2-1981	0	Hawaii
76	Hutchinson, Steve	G	6-5	313	11-1-1977	3	Michigan
71	Jones, Walter	T	6-5	308	1-19-1974	7	Florida State
68	Norman, Dennis	C	6-5	312	1-26-1980	1	Princeton
72	Terry, Chris	T	6-5	295	8-8-1975	5	Georgia
61	Tobeck, Robbie	C	6-4	297	3-6-1970	10	Washington State
77	Womack, Floyd	T	6-4	333	11-15-1978	3	Mississippi State
70	Wunsch, Jerry	T	6-6	339	1-21-1974	7	Wisconsin

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
37	Alexander, Shaun	RB	5-11	225	8-30-1977	4	Alabama
32	Carter, Kerry	RB	6-1	238	12-19-1980	1	Stanford
35	Davis, Chris	RB	5-11	235	11-8-1979	1	Syracuse
44	Evans, Heath	RB	6-1	245	12-30-1978	3	Auburn
20	Morris, Maurice	RB	5-11	202	12-1-1979	2	Oregon
38	Strong, Mack	RB	6-1	245	9-11-1971	10	Georgia

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
85	Bannister, Alex	WR	6-5	207	4-23-1979	3	Eastern Kentucky
84	Engram, Bobby	WR	5-10	188	1-7-1973	8	Penn State
83	Hannam, Ryan	TE	6-2	248	2-24-1980	2	Northern Iowa
82	Jackson, Darrell	WR	6-1	201	12-6-1978	4	Florida
88	Mili, Itula	TE	6-4	260	4-20-1973	6	Brigham Young
81	Robinson, Koren	WR	6-1	205	3-19-1980	3	North Carolina State
86	Stevens, Jerramy	TE	6-7	260	11-13-1979	2	Washington
89	Urban, Jerheme	WR	6-3	212	11-26-1980	0	Trinity International
87	Wallace, Taco	WR	6-1	190	4-14-1981	1	Kansas State

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
99	Bernard, Rocky	DT	6-3	293	4-19-1979	2	Texas A&M
78	Cochran, Antonio	DE	6-4	299	6-21-1976	5	Georgia
72	Dwyer, Nate	DT	6-3	316	9-30-1978	0	Kansas
97	Mitchell, Brandon	DE	6-3	290	6-19-1975	7	Texas A&M
95	Moore, Rashad	DT	6-3	324	3-16-1979	1	Tennessee
56	Okeafor, Chike	DE	6-4	265	3-27-1976	5	Purdue
91	Palepoi, Anton	DE	6-3	283	11-19-1978	2	UNLV
68	Smith, Ron	DT	6-3	310	8-18-1978	1	Lane
	Wistrom, Grant	DE	6-4	272	7-3-1976	6	Nebraska
98	Woodard, Cedric	DT	6-2	310	9-5-1977	3	Texas

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
30	Bernard, Walter	S	6-2	200	5-3-1978	1	New Mexico
34	Bierria, Terreal	S	6-3	211	10-10-1980	1	Georgia
	Franklin, Brad	CB	6-1	184	12-22-1979	1	Louisiana-Lafayette
26	Hamlin, Ken	S	6-2	209	1-20-1981	1	Arkansas
21	Lucas, Ken	CB	6-1	205	1-23-1979	3	Mississippi
42	Richard, Kris	CB	5-11	190	10-28-1978	2	USC
22	Robinson, Damien	S	6-2	223	12-23-1973	6	Iowa
	Taylor, Bobby	CB	6-3	216	12-28-1973	9	Notre Dame
23	Trufant, Marcus	CB	5-11	199	12-25-1980	1	Washington State

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Bates, Solomon	LB	6-1	243	4-18-1982	1	Arizona State
94	Brown, Chad	LB	6-2	245	7-12-1970	11	Colorado
57	Huff, Orlando	LB	6-2	250	8-14-1978	3	Fresno State
58	Kacyvenski, Isaiah	LB	6-1	252	10-3-1977	4	Harvard
54	Lewis, D.D.	LB	6-1	241	1-8-1979	2	Texas
51	Simmons, Anthony	LB	6-1	240	6-20-1976	6	Clemson
59	White, Tracy	LB	6-1	230	4-14-1981	1	Howard

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
3	Brown, Josh	K	6-1	202	4-29-1979	1	Nebraska
16	Rouen, Tom	P	6-3	225	6-9-1968	11	Colorado

TED S. WARREN/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

DAVID DUROCHIK/SPORTPICS

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Matt Hasselbeck
FB	Mack Strong
RB	Shaun Alexander
LT	Walter Jones
LG	Steve Hutchinson
C	Robbie Tobeck
RG	Chris Gray
RT	Chris Terry
TE	Itula Mili
WR	Koren Robinson
WR	Darrell Jackson

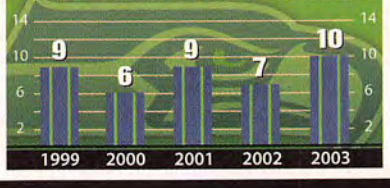
DEFENSE

LE	Chike Okeafor
LT	Cedric Woodard
RT	Marcus Tubbs
RE	Grant Wistrom
LLB	Anthony Simmons
MLB	Solomon Bates
RLB	Chad Brown
LCB	Marcus Trufant
RCB	Bobby Taylor
SS	Michael Boulware
FS	Ken Hamlin

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Tom Rouen
K	Josh Brown
PR	Bobby Engram
KR	Maurice Morris

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND



2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	23	Tubbs, Marcus	DT	6-3	324	5-16-81	Texas
2	21	Boulware, Michael	LB	6-2	225	9-17-81	Florida State
3	21	Locklear, Sean	G	6-3	301	5-29-81	North Carolina St.
4	20	Koutouvides, Niko	LB	6-2	238	3-25-81	Purdue
5	25	Hackett, D.J.	WR	6-2	199	7-31-81	Colorado
6	24	Terrill, Craig	DT	6-2	294	6-27-80	Purdue
7	23	Jones, Donnie	P	6-2	222	7-5-80	LSU

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ New Orleans		
Sept. 12		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 2 @ Tampa Bay		
Sept. 19		4:05
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 3 vs. San Francisco		
Sept. 26		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 4 OPEN DATE		
WEEK 5 vs. St. Louis		
Oct. 10		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 6 @ New England		
Oct. 17		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 7 @ Arizona		
Oct. 24		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 8 vs. Carolina		
Oct. 31		4:05
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 9 @ San Francisco		
Nov. 7		4:05
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 10 @ St. Louis		
Nov. 14		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 11 vs. Miami		
Nov. 21		4:05
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 12 vs. Buffalo		
Nov. 28		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 13 vs. Dallas		
Dec. 6		9:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 14 @ Minnesota		
Dec. 12		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 15 @ New York Jets		
Dec. 19		1:00
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 16 vs. Arizona		
Dec. 26		4:15
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 17 vs. Atlanta		
Jan. 2		4:05
W / L	Score:	

All times Eastern

ST. LOUIS RAMS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 2 2003 RECORD: 12-4

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Chris Chandler, QB** (CHI)
- **Sean Moran, DE** (SF)

STADIUM FACTS

Edward Jones Dome

Capacity: **66,000** Turf: **Artificial**
Tickets: **314-425-8830**
Web site: **www.stlouisrams.com**

Avg. Attendance **66,057**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **100.1**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$54.92**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$10.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$2.75**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$6.75 / 24oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.00 / 14oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: In 1948, the Rams introduced headgear with painted horns on the sides, thus becoming the first pro football franchise with an insignia or logo on its helmets.

STAT: Since relocating to St. Louis prior to the start of the 1995 season, the Rams are 32-0 (including postseason) when they have a 100-yard rusher in a game.

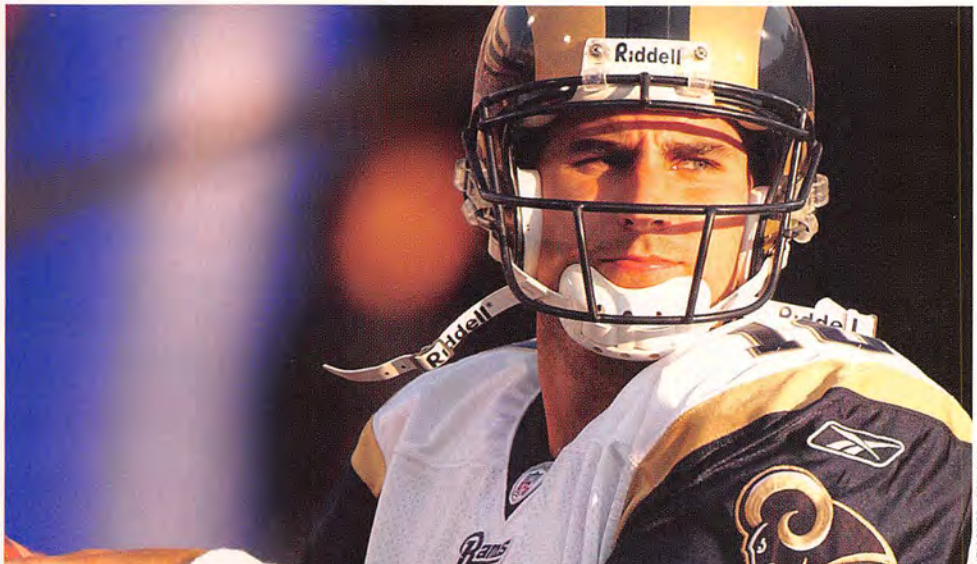
LOOK IT UP: Hall-of-Famer Pete Rozelle served as the Rams' publicist, and later as the team's general manager, before being named NFL commissioner on Jan. 26, 1960.

THE COUNT:

17 – Consecutive wins when Rams have scored 30+ points (including playoffs).

39 – Field goals made by Jeff Wilkins in 2003, tying the NFL season record.

17-3 – Marc Bulger's record in his first 20 NFL starts, same as Kurt Warner's.



Marc Bulger, QB

TOP TO BOTTOM: PAUL JASIENSKI; CRAIG MITCHELL/DREAMSTIME.COM

Lovie's left for Chicago, but Martz's high-octane offense still makes the Rams a big threat

Departure of Wistrom and Faulk's health are concerns

After bouncing back with another NFC West division title, the Rams' 2003 season ended with a surprising and disappointing collapse.

They gave up a season-high 30 points to the lowly Lions in a loss that cost them home-field advantage throughout the NFC playoffs, then lost their home opener in the postseason anyway to Carolina.

Coach Mike Martz brought in old pal Larry Marmie to replace new Chicago head coach Lovie Smith as defensive coordinator. Under Smith, the Rams led the league in takeaways, but Martz's high-risk offense also led the league in giveaways.

Changes loom as familiar names depart, but nobody is ready to forget the Rams as Super Bowl contenders from the only NFC division that won no playoff games.

Offensive line

Grade: B

The re-signing of right guard Adam Timmerman and the franchise tag placed again on left tackle Orlando Pace means the offensive line remains intact after all five starters answered the bell for all 16 games, a rare and welcome occurrence.

Right tackle Kyle Turley took time to adjust to the new offense but added toughness. Center Dave Wohlabaugh was hampered part

He said it:

"For me to go and play behind Marshall (Faulk) is going to be great for me and my career in the latter part of my years."

—rookie RB Steven Jackson

of the time as he played with a cast. Andy McCollum is the left guard. With backups John St. Clair and David Loverne both gone, there is a need for depth besides Andy King but seventh-rounder Larry Turner was the only draft addition.

Quarterbacks

Grade: B-

Martz kept saying former star Kurt Warner would get his chance to compete with starter Marc Bulger, but as soon as the Rams signed veteran Chris Chandler and drafted Jeff Smoker, Warner's departure appeared likely once again at press time.

Bulger stayed healthy enough to start 15 games and complete 63 percent of his passes. But his 22 touchdown passes were matched by 22 interceptions, not good enough to make anyone forget that Warner won two league MVP awards before falling on hard times.

Running backs

Grade: B+

Marshall Faulk is 31 and facing almost annual offseason knee surgery to keep him upright. He hasn't started 16 games since 1999, coincidentally the year the Rams won it all. When he did play last season, his 3.9-yard average was his worst output since 1996.

Make no mistake: Faulk is still what stirs the Rams' offense, but one or two more years are the most that can be expected. So when top-rated running back Steven Jackson started falling in the draft, the Rams traded up to land him. Lamar Gordon looked like a capable backup, but injuries limited him to 10 games, so Jackson is likely to see action early. He is a bigger back than Martz has had, and can catch, too. Joey Goodspeed is the fullback.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	341.1	9
Rushing	93.5	30
Passing	247.6	3
Scoring	447	2T
Punt Returns	8.6	19
Kick Returns	21.3	17
Red Zone TD %	50.0	15
Total Defense	315.8	16
Against Rush	123.8	20T
Against Pass	192.0	12
Points Allowed	328	17
Interceptions	24	4T
Sacks	42	4
Turnover Diff.	+7	7

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
335	97	211	27

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
68	318	34	27

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
19	23	5	5

RAMS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **NORM VAN BROCKLIN**
   Career Passing Yards: **23,611**
   Career TD Passes: **173**
2. **ROMAN GABRIEL**
   Career Passing Yards: **29,444**
   Career TD Passes: **201**
3. **KURT WARNER**
   Career Passing Yards: **14,447**
   Career TD Passes: **102**

FINALSHOT/JRP

Receivers

Grade: A-

Torry Holt emerged as the No. 1 receiver in the league in catches and yardage, but there was less balance between Holt and Isaac Bruce than Martz would prefer. For the first time in four years, the duo didn't enjoy 1,000-yard seasons together.

The presence of a healthy third receiver, speedy Kevin Curtis, will help. After breaking a leg, he appeared in only four games as a rookie and had to undergo offseason surgery. Without him, the Rams were unable to satisfactorily replace Ricky Proehl. Dane Looker, Mike Furrey and Shaun McDonald also see action.

The re-signing of tight end Brandon Manumaleuna should help both the blocking and short-range receiving. Erik Jensen was added late in the draft.

Defensive line

Grade: B-

Losing right end Grant Wistrom to Seattle and tackle Brian Young to New Orleans in free agency means the Rams must count on increased production from three young No. 1 draft choices at defensive tackle—Ryan Pickett, Damione Lewis and Jimmy Kennedy. Only Pickett has been reliable and healthy so far. Marmie likes more bulk up front than Smith did, so Kennedy has a chance to play.

Left end Leonard Little was the team's best defender last season with 12.5 sacks, but got himself into more trouble on draft eve with a drunk-driving arrest that could jeopardize his future in football because he was responsible for a traffic death in 1998. His situation is under review by the league.

Enigmatic Martz gave critics lots to chew on with playoff-game decision to kick

When Mike Martz wasn't addressing the ongoing Kurt Warner soap opera, he spent much of his offseason defending his decision not to go for a touchdown in the waning moments of the Rams' NFC divisional playoff against the Carolina Panthers.

Mike Martz

AL KOOISTRA

Rather than taking one last crack at the end zone deep in Carolina territory, the head coach of the St. Louis Rams allowed the clock to tick down. Finally, he sent in Jeff Wilkins, who kicked a field goal to send the game into overtime, where the Rams lost.

For any other coach, such a conservative decision would not seem unusual in a league full of by-the-book play-callers. But this was Martz, the maverick coach and architect of the wide-open "Greatest Show on Turf," the fearless gunslinger not afraid to thumb his nose at conventional wisdom.

The Rams had battled back from an 11-point deficit, but Martz opted not to go for the knockout, a low-risk decision since there was time for two plays. Instead, he worried that a sack or penalty would take them out of field-goal range.

"It's contrary to what we've done in the past and before the game I'd have never done that," Martz said. "But the feel of the game, and how we performed in the red zone earlier in the game, made me swing into that mode more than anything else."

It seemed so out of character. Then again, Martz seemed like a different man throughout the year. He was less prone to barking at the media and seemed less uptight. His offense seemed to grow more conservative. Instead of quick scores, it became more about controlling the clock and wearing down defenses.

"Move-the-chains football," wide receiver Isaac Bruce called it.

Perhaps Martz will learn from the experience and go back to his renegade style in 2004. Then again, he could grow even more conservative.

With Martz, the only certainty is that he'll remain the league's most enigmatic head coach.

—Pete Williams

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 12, Lost 4

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	23-13	at New York Giants
09/14	W	27-24 (OT)	San Francisco
09/21	L	24-23	at Seattle
09/28	W	37-13	Arizona
10/13	W	36-0	Atlanta
10/19	W	34-24	Green Bay
10/26	W	33-21	at Pittsburgh
11/02	L	30-10	at San Francisco
11/09	W	33-22	Baltimore
11/16	W	23-21	at Chicago
11/23	W	30-27 (OT)	at Arizona
11/30	W	48-17	Minnesota
12/08	W	26-20	at Cleveland
12/14	W	27-22	Seattle
12/21	W	27-10	Cincinnati
12/28	L	30-20	at Detroit

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
M. Faulk	209	818	3.9	52	10
Gordon	71	298	4.2	20	1
Harris	85	255	3.0	18	4
Bulger	29	75	2.6	28	4
Bruce	2	17	8.5	14	0
Manumaleuna	4	15	3.8	8	0
McDonald	2	7	3.5	5	0
Wilkins	1	7	7.0	7	0
Furrey	3	5	1.7	2	0
Holt	1	5	5.0	5	0
Massey	1	-1	-1.0	-1	0
Cleeland	2	-5	-2.5	0	0
Rams	**411**	**1496**	**3.6**	**52**	**19**
Opponents	**412**	**1980**	**4.8**	**76t**	**9**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Holt	117	1696	14.5	48	12
Bruce	69	981	14.2	41	5
Looker	47	495	10.5	41	3
M. Faulk	45	290	6.4	30	1
Manumaleuna	29	238	8.2	39	2
Furrey	20	189	9.5	24	0
Harris	15	102	6.8	26	0
Cleeland	10	145	14.5	29	0
McDonald	10	62	6.2	13	0
Gordon	8	59	7.4	21	0
Curtis	4	13	3.3	8	0
St. Clair	1	18	18.0	18	0
Nead	1	6	6.0	6	0
Rams	**377**	**4287**	**11.4**	**48**	**23**
Opponents	**296**	**3363**	**11.4**	**77**	**23**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Bulger	532	336	3845	22	22
Warner	65	38	365	1	1
Bruce	2	2	66	0	0
Looker	1	1	11	0	0
Rams	**600**	**377**	**4287**	**23**	**23**
Opponents	**510**	**296**	**3363**	**23**	**24**

SACKS

Little 12.5, Wistrom 7.5, Jackson 5.5, Archuleta 5.0, B. Fisher 2.0, Thomas 2.0, Tinoisamoa 2.0, Young 2.0, Duncan 1.0, Pickett 1.0, A. Williams 1.0, Lewis 0.5

Rams 42.0, Opponents 43.0

t=touchdown

Leonard Little, DE

The Rams hope they can make up for Wistrom's 7.5 sacks using a combination of Tyoka Jackson, Bryce Fisher, Erik Flowers and former Ram Sean Moran, who was signed as a free agent. Replacing Wistrom's hustle won't be easy, but they like the potential of third-rounder Tony Hargrove of Georgia Tech.

Linebackers

Grade: C+

Strongside rookie Pisa Tinoisamoa led the team in tackles and raced sideline to sideline. Weakside starter Tommy Polley gave similar effort and got similar production on the other side. The middle needs to be upgraded between Jamie Duncan and Robert Thomas. Jeremy Loyd and Justin Smith are backups and 250-pound rookie Brandon Chillar has a chance to jump into the mix right away just as Tinoisamoa and Polley did.

Secondary

Grade: B-

The Rams kept cornerback Jerametrius Butler and hope he can be more physical opposite Travis Fisher. Second-year backups DeJuan Groce and Kevin Garrett figure to be improved. Safeties Adam Archuleta and Aeneas Williams are the strength of the defense.

Williams barely skipped a beat in his transition to safety from cornerback, again tying for the team lead in interceptions with four. Re-signing valuable backup Rich Coady was key because he can play both safety spots.

Draft pick Jason Shivers also has good size and speed.

Special teams

Grade: B

Sean Landeta returns for his 22nd year as a professional punter. He's been punting for dollars since his USFL days, longer than some of his teammates have lived. Jeff Wilkins hit 39 of 42 field goals in an outstanding season. Groce and Furrey share punt-returning duties, and backup running back Arlen Harris looked promising as a kickoff-return specialist.

Management

Grade: A

Not many organizations work more smoothly together than Martz, General Manager Charley Armey, President of Football Operations Jay Zygmunt and President John Shaw. They are trying to reload, not rebuild. Selecting Jackson when nobody else seemed to want the top-rated back in the draft could define the team's future.

Bottom line

Nobody thought the Rams could win without Warner and Faulk. They are about to find out. With both the Cardinals and 49ers rebuilding in the division, the Seahawks remain their No. 1 hurdle.

FINAL GRADE 87

Rams ROSTER

Mike Martz, head coach

Gill Byrd, defensive asst.; **Henry Ellard**, off. asst./wide receivers; **Steve Fairchild**, offensive coord.-quarterbacks; **Frank Falks**, tight ends; **Perry Fewell**, secondary; **Bill Kollar**, defensive line; **John Matsko**, assoc. head coach-offensive line; **Wilbert Montgomery**, running backs; **John Ramsdell**, wide receivers; **Matt Sheldon**, special asst.-quality control; **Larry Marmie**, def.coord.; **Mike Stock**, special teams; **Joe Vitt**, linebackers

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
10	Bulger, Marc	QB	6-3	215	4-5-1977	2	West Virginia
12	Chandler, Chris	QB	6-4	224	10-12-1965	16	Washington
13	Warner, Kurt	QB	6-2	220	6-22-1971	6	Northern Iowa

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
50	Eby, Andy	C	6-3	300	4-26-1979	0	Kansas State
65	King, Andy	G	6-4	310	11-9-1978	2	Illinois State
67	McCollum, Andy	G	6-4	300	6-2-1970	9	Toledo
76	Pace, Orlando	T	6-7	325	11-4-1975	7	Ohio State
63	Tercero, Scott	G	6-4	303	10-28-1981	0	California
62	Timmerman, Adam	G	6-4	310	8-14-1971	9	South Dakota State
68	Turley, Kyle	T	6-5	309	9-24-1975	6	San Diego State
77	Williams, Grant	T	6-7	320	5-10-1974	8	Louisiana Tech
64	Wohlabaugh, Dave	C	6-3	296	4-13-1972	9	Syracuse

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
28	Faulk, Marshall	RB	5-10	211	2-26-1973	10	San Diego State
44	Goodspeed, Joey	RB	6-1	247	2-22-1978	2	Notre Dame
34	Gordon, Lamar	RB	6-1	228	1-7-1980	2	North Dakota State
33	Harris, Arlen	RB	5-10	212	4-22-1980	1	Hofstra
45	Massey, Chris	RB	6-1	245	8-21-1979	2	Marshall

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
80	Bruce, Isaac	WR	6-1	188	11-10-1972	10	Memphis
	Coleman, Michael	WR	5-11	190	9-7-1980	0	Widener
83	Curtis, Kevin	WR	5-11	186	7-17-1978	1	Utah State
82	Furrey, Mike	WR	6-1	185	5-12-1977	1	Northern Iowa
81	Holt, Torry	WR	6-1	190	6-5-1976	5	North Carolina State
89	Looker, Dane	WR	6-1	194	4-5-1976	2	Washington
86	Manumaleuna, Brandon	TE	6-2	288	1-4-1980	3	Arizona
84	McDonald, Shaun	WR	5-10	183	6-13-1981	1	Arizona State
47	Nead, Spencer	TE	6-4	259	11-3-1977	1	Brigham Young

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
94	Fisher, Bryce	DE	6-3	272	5-12-1977	3	Air Force
97	Jackson, Tyoka	DT	6-2	280	11-22-1971	9	Penn State
73	Kennedy, Jimmy	DT	6-4	320	11-15-1979	1	Penn State
92	Lewis, Damione	DT	6-2	301	3-1-1978	3	Miami (FL)
91	Little, Leonard	DE	6-3	261	10-19-1974	6	Tennessee
96	Flowers, Erik	DE	6-4	273	3-1-1978	4	Arizona State
99	Moran, Sean	DE	6-4	275	6-5-1973	8	Colorado State
79	Pickett, Ryan	DT	6-2	310	10-8-1979	3	Ohio State

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
31	Archuleta, Adam	S	6-1	223	11-27-1977	3	Arizona State
23	Butler, Jerametrius	CB	5-10	181	11-28-1978	3	Kansas State
25	Coady, Rich	S	6-1	210	1-26-1976	5	Texas A&M
22	Fisher, Travis	CB	5-10	189	9-12-1979	2	UCF
21	Garrett, Kevin	CB	5-10	194	7-29-1980	1	Southern Methodist
24	Groce, DeJuan	CB	5-10	192	2-17-1980	1	Nebraska
38	Walton, Shane	S	5-11	195	10-9-1979	1	Notre Dame
35	Williams, Aeneas	S	5-11	200	1-29-1968	13	Southern University

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
59	Duncan, Jamie	LB	6-1	238	7-20-1975	6	Vanderbilt
57	Faulk, Trev	LB	6-2	241	8-6-1981	0	LSU
56	Loyd, Jeremy	LB	6-2	235	7-30-1980	1	Iowa State
97	Newson, Tony	LB	6-1	247	9-11-1979	1	Utah State
52	Polley, Tommy	LB	6-3	240	1-18-1978	3	Florida State
53	Smith, Justin	LB	6-1	218	6-5-1979	1	Indiana
58	Spoon, Brandon	LB	6-2	244	7-5-1978	1	North Carolina
55	Thomas, Robert	LB	6-1	237	7-17-1980	2	UCLA
50	Tinoisamoa, Pisa	LB	6-1	235	7-15-1981	1	Hawaii

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
5	Landeta, Sean	P	6-1	215	1-6-1962	19	Towson
14	Wilkins, Jeff	K	6-2	205	4-19-1972	10	Youngstown State

NEWMAN LOWRANCE

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Marc Bulger
FB	Joey Goodspeed
RB	Marshall Faulk
LT	Orlando Pace
LG	Andy McCollum
C	Dave Wohlabaugh
RG	Adam Timmerman
RT	Kyle Turley
TE	Brandon Manumaleuna
WR	Torry Holt
WR	Isaac Bruce

DEFENSE

LE	Leonard Little
LT	Damione Lewis
RT	Ryan Pickett
RE	Sean Moran
LLB	Pisa Tinoisamoa
MLB	Robert Thomas
RLB	Tommy Polley
LCB	Jerametrius Butler
RCB	Travis Fisher
SS	Adam Archuleta
FS	Aeneas Williams

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Sean Landeta
K	Jeff Wilkins
PR	Mike Furrey
KR	Arlen Harris

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Arizona	
Sept. 12	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 2 @ Atlanta	
Sept. 19	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 3 vs. New Orleans	
Sept. 26	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 4 @ San Francisco	
Oct. 3	8:30
W/L	Score:
WEEK 5 @ Seattle	
Oct. 10	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 6 vs. Tampa Bay	
Oct. 18	9:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 7 @ Miami	
Oct. 24	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 8 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 9 vs. New England	
Nov. 7	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 10 vs. Seattle	
Nov. 14	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 11 @ Buffalo	
Nov. 21	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 12 @ Green Bay	
Nov. 29	9:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 13 vs. San Francisco	
Dec. 5	1:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 14 @ Carolina	
Dec. 12	4:15
W/L	Score:
WEEK 15 @ Arizona	
Dec. 19	4:05
W/L	Score:
WEEK 16 vs. Philadelphia	
Dec. 27	9:00
W/L	Score:
WEEK 17 vs. New York Jets	
Jan. 2	1:00
W/L	Score:

All times Eastern

AFC EAST AFC NORTH AFC SOUTH AFC WEST NFC EAST NFC NORTH NFC SOUTH NFC WEST

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	24	Jackson, Steven	RB	6-2	233	7-22-83	Oregon State
3	28	Hargrove, Tony	DE	6-4	274	7-20-83	Georgia Tech
4	34	Chillar, Brandon	LB	6-2	253	10-21-82	UCLA
5	26	Shivers, Jason	S	6-1	201	11-4-82	Arizona State
6	36	Smoker, Jeff	QB	6-3	223	6-13-81	Michigan State
7	36	Jensen, Erik	TE	6-3	259	10-11-80	Iowa
7	37	Turner, Larry	T	6-3	296	3-8-82	Eastern Kentucky

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 3 2003 RECORD: 7-9

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Brandon Whiting, DE** (trade, PHI)
- **Greg Randall, OL** (HOU)
- **Scott Rehberg, OL** (CIN)

STADIUM FACTS

3Com Park

Capacity: **69,734** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **415-656-4900**
Web site: **www.sf49ers.com**

Avg. Attendance **67,581**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **96.9**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$58.00**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$20.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$4.25**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.00 / 14oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$3.50 / 24oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Former San Francisco quarterbacks Steve Young (96.8), Joe Montana (92.3) and Jeff Garcia (88.3) own the top three career passer ratings in NFL history (minimum 2,000 attempts).

STAT: Niners coach Dennis Erickson owns a 144-57-1 record (.715) as a college coach, but he is just 38-42 (.475) in the pro ranks.

LOOK IT UP: The 49ers have played an NFL-record 418 consecutive regular-season games without being shut out. The last time the 'Niners failed to score in a game was on Oct. 9, 1977, versus Atlanta.

THE COUNT:
+37 – San Francisco's NFL-leading turnover differential from 2001-03.
6.0 – Kevan Barlow's rushing average in 49ers' wins last season.
418 – Number of consecutive games in which the 49ers have scored, the longest streak in NFL history.

No T.O., no Garcia, no Garrison, no Mora—49ers are in major rebuilding mode

'Niners are now Tim Rattay's team

After one season on the job, Dennis Erickson finally gets to really start his tenure as coach of the 49ers. Last year, Erickson served mostly as a caretaker for players and systems no longer employed. The 7-9 result left the 49ers uncharacteristically sidelined for the playoffs.

Not many teams can get rid of a starting quarterback, both wide receivers, the tight end, a productive running back, two veteran offensive linemen and a proven defensive coordinator and still enter a season with optimism. Yet the 49ers believe they remain a contender capable of rebuilding on the fly.

While the subtraction of controversial Terrell Owens might seem more like an addition, the loss of quarterback Jeff Garcia, popular running back Garrison Hearst, receiver Tai Streets and defensive coordinator Jim Mora Jr. will leave voids that Erickson must fill. No other team in the league lost as much offense.

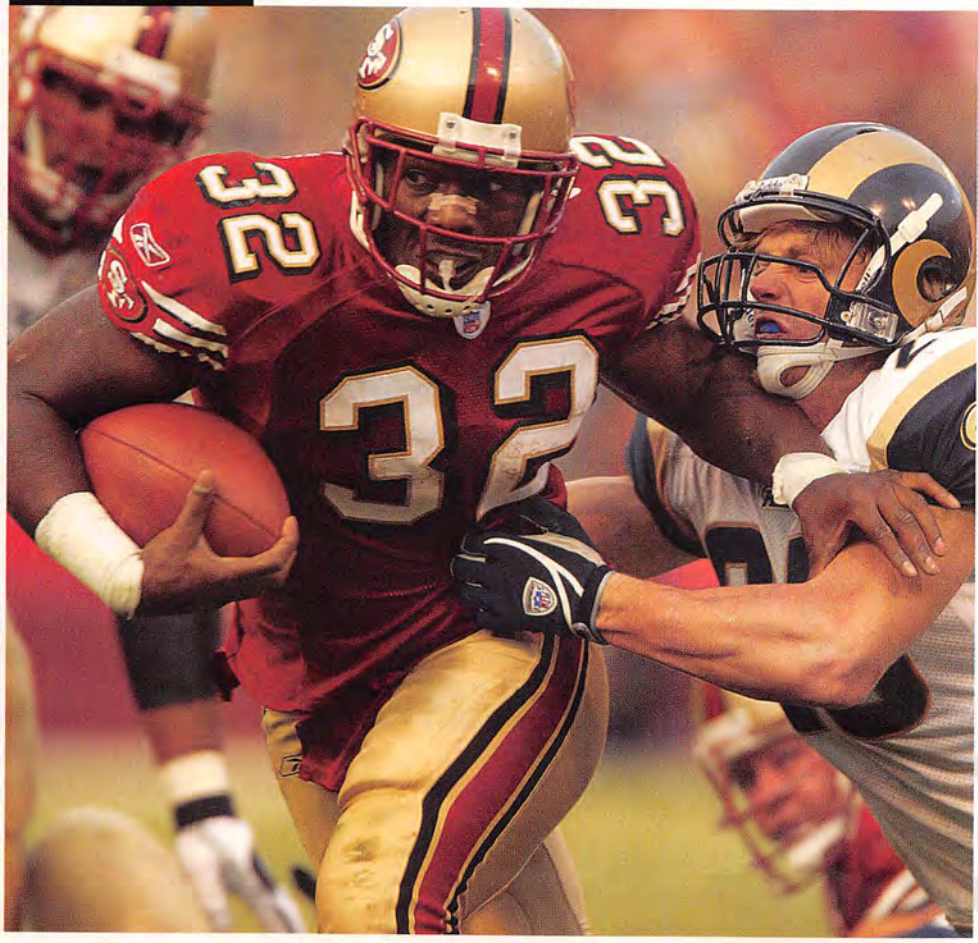
Offensive line

Grade: C+

Longtime left tackle Derrick Deese now works in Tampa and former Pro Bowl right guard Ron Stone moved across the bay to Oakland, so second-round draft pick Justin Smiley has a chance to start somewhere.

Second-year player Kwame Harris seems more like a right tackle but must replace Deese on the left side. Harris lost weight after shoulder surgery and the 49ers hope he's more agile. Scott Gragg will stay at right tackle and center Jeremy Newberry and left guard Eric Heitmann appear set.

Kevan Barlow, RB



The right guard spot has been claimed by Kyle Kosier, who started 12 games at three different positions last season. Smiley and newcomers Scott Rehberg and Greg Randall will also compete. Brock Gutierrez, Jerome Davis and Rob Murphy will compete for backup jobs.

Quarterbacks

Grade: C+

The exit of Garcia and offensive coordinator Greg Knapp means Erickson and new coordinator Ted Tollner will be able to implement more of a downfield passing game with Tim Rattay. In three starts in place of Garcia, Rattay's seven touchdown passes and near 62-percent completion mark convinced the 49ers he has earned a shot.

With Ken Dorsey and Brandon Doman as backups, the 49ers are one of the least experienced teams in the league at the most vital position. They also drafted Washington's Cody Pickett in the seventh round.

Since Rattay is nowhere near as mobile as Garcia or predecessors Steve Young or Joe Montana, the blocking of the line will be noticed more closely than ever.

Running backs

Grade: B

Kevan Barlow is a hard runner who flourished while sharing time with Hearst. He averaged an impressive 5.1 yards a carry last year, but had only 201 carries. Now Barlow must prove he can stay healthy while carrying a full load.

Barlow is not an adept blocker so the 49ers welcome the role of fullback Fred Beasley, widely recognized as one of the best in the league at his position. Somebody has to emerge to back up Barlow. It could be Jamal Robertson.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	355.4	5
Rushing	142.4	5
Passing	213.0	10
Scoring	384	9
Punt Returns	6.9	27
Kick Returns	20.7	23
Red Zone TD %	46.8	21
Total Defense	308.0	13
Against Rush	105.6	9
Against Pass	202.4	17
Points Allowed	337	21
Interceptions	23	6
Sacks	42	5
Turnover Diff.	+12	4

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
313	118	172	23

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
62	252	29	17

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
16	25	3	1

49ERS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **JOE MONTANA**
   Career Passing Yards: **40,551**
   Career TD Passes: **273**
2. **STEVE YOUNG**
   Career Passing Yards: **33,124**
   Career TD Passes: **232**
3. **JOHN BRODIE**
   Career Passing Yards: **31,548**
   Career TD Passes: **214**

FINALSHOT/JRP

Receivers

Grade: C

The 49ers not only have to learn to get along without Owens (80 catches) and Streets (47), they also lost their No. 3 target, tight end Jed Weaver, to Denver. Enter No. 1 draft pick Rashaun Woods and No. 3 pick Derrick Hamilton. Much is expected from both. Woods has size and good ability to run after the catch, which is what the 49ers will miss most about Owens. Hamilton also has height but could take a year to develop after coming out early.

Brandon Lloyd caught only 14 passes as a fourth-round rookie, two for touchdowns, enough to convince Erickson he can play regularly. The leading returning receiver is Cedrick Wilson, and the 49ers hope tight end Eric Johnson can return to 2002 form after missing last year with a broken collarbone. Aaron Walker is a second-year backup at tight end.

Defensive line

Grade: B-

New defensive coordinator Willy Robinson arrived from Pittsburgh with a background in the 3-4 defense and enough 49er linebackers to pull it off. But the defensive line isn't suited to the scheme. Ends Andre Carter and John Engelberger are undersized. Newcomer Brandon Whiting, who arrived from Philadelphia in the Owens deal, failed his physical and the trade might be nullified if the 49ers don't like what they see by Sept. 1. Second-year prospect Andrew Williams looks improved and could figure in the rotation.

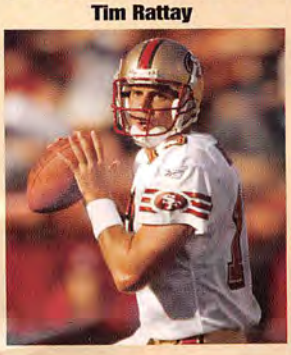
Neither Bryant Young nor Anthony Adams are prototype nose tackles. Young is

49ers are confident that Rattay's play will prove Garcia was dispensable

When the 49ers waved goodbye to Jeff Garcia in a salary-cap purge in March, they were left with little experience at quarterback.

That might be a cause for concern were it not for the fact that in the NFL quarterbacks have become almost as disposable as kickers, punters or long snappers. If critics suggested the 49ers were foolish to cast their lot with the unproven Tim Rattay for 2004, club officials only had to look at the success of Garcia, a late bloomer from the Canadian Football League.

Tim Rattay



JEFF CARLICK

No longer is the NFL a league of one-team career cornerstones like John Elway, Dan Marino and Troy Aikman, all bound for the Hall of Fame. These days, journeymen Brad Johnson and Trent Dilfer have Super Bowl rings. Tom Brady, a sixth-round pick, now has two after replacing Drew Bledsoe. Kurt Warner, a former MVP, was plucked from the Arena Football League. Tommy Maddox took a detour to the XFL. Jake Delhomme, an undrafted free agent, received most of his playing time in NFL Europe before last season.

Garcia, for all of his eye-popping production, never made 49er fans forget about Joe Montana and Steve Young. He lacked the cannon arm, scrambling ability, flair for the dramatic and ability to thrive when ailing.

Last season, Rattay led the 49ers to consecutive wins over the Rams and Steelers while Garcia recovered from an ankle sprain. But Rattay was sacked four times in a 20-10 loss in Green Bay.

Unlike Garcia, Rattay does not have a knack for escaping sacks. He'll have a tougher assignment without Garrison Hearst, one of league's best backs at picking up the blitz. Rattay also must rely on inexperienced second-year man Kwame Harris at left tackle.

At press time, the 49ers had no plans to sign a veteran quarterback as an insurance policy. Former University of Miami star Ken Dorsey, who did not take a snap as a rookie, will be the backup, followed by Brandon Doman, a fifth-round pick out of BYU in 2002.

General Manager Terry Donahue, knowing that star quarterbacks emerge quickly and from unlikely sources, has anointed Rattay the unconditional starter.

"The job," Donahue says, "will be his to keep."

—Pete Williams

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 7, Lost 9

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	W	49-7	Chicago
09/14	L	27-24 (OT)	at St. Louis
09/21	L	13-12	Cleveland
09/28	L	35-7	at Minnesota
10/05	W	24-17	Detroit
10/12	L	20-19	at Seattle
10/19	W	24-7	Tampa Bay
10/26	L	16-13 (OT)	at Arizona
11/02	W	30-10	St. Louis
11/17	W	30-14	Pittsburgh
11/23	L	20-10	at Green Bay
11/30	L	44-6	at Baltimore
12/07	W	50-14	Arizona
12/14	L	41-38	at Cincinnati
12/21	W	31-28 (OT)	at Philadelphia
12/27	L	24-17	Seattle

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Barlow	201	1024	5.1	78t	6
Hearst	178	768	4.3	36	3
Garcia	56	319	5.7	21t	7
Robertson	32	136	4.3	23	0
Beasley	17	24	1.4	5	0
Battle	2	14	7.0	9	0
Lafleur	1	0	0.0	0	0
Rattay	8	0	0.0	6	0
Owens	3	-2	-0.7	3	0
Wilson	1	-4	-4.0	-4	0
49ers	**499**	**2279**	**4.6**	**78t**	**16**
Opponents	**420**	**1690**	**4.0**	**49t**	**13**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Owens	80	1102	13.8	75t	9
Streets	47	595	12.7	41t	7
Weaver	35	437	12.5	30	1
Wilson	35	396	11.3	29	2
Barlow	35	307	8.8	48	1
Hearst	25	211	8.4	26	1
Beasley	19	184	9.7	32	1
Lloyd	14	212	15.1	44	2
Walker	8	116	14.5	26	1
Garcia	1	6	6.0	6	0
49ers	**299**	**3566**	**11.9**	**75t**	**25**
Opponents	**310**	**3544**	**11.4**	**75t**	**25**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Garcia	392	225	2704	18	13
Rattay	118	73	856	7	2
Wilson	1	1	6	0	0
49ers	**511**	**299**	**3566**	**25**	**15**
Opponents	**514**	**310**	**3544**	**25**	**23**

SACKS

J. Peterson 7.0, Carter 6.5, Engelberger 4.5, Ahanotu 4.0, Smith 3.5, Young 3.5, Winborn 3.0, Ulbrich 2.5, Rumph 2.0, Adams 1.5, Kirschke 1.5, Moran 1.5, Heard 0.5, Parrish 0.5

49ers 42.0, Opponents 28.0

t=touchdown

Julian Peterson, LB

too valuable to become a part-time player, so the team is likely to remain in the 4-3. Fourth-rounder Isaac Sopoaga was one of the strongest defensive linemen in the draft and seventh-rounder Christian Ferrara is also a run-stopper.

Linebackers

Grade: A

The strength of the defense, this unit starts with Julian Peterson, the one player the team couldn't afford to lose in free agency. He led the 'Niners in sacks and was second in tackles to inside linebacker Derek Smith.

If injured Jamie Winborn returns to join Jeff Ulbrich and promising Saleem Rasheed, Robinson has more good linebackers than he knows what to do with. The 49ers still couldn't resist drafting a former Erickson recruit at Oregon State, Richard Seigler, in the fourth round.

Secondary

Grade: B-

Re-signed Ahmed Plummer and developing Mike Rumph will start at the corners. With Jason Webster gone to Atlanta with Mora Jr., Rashad Holman and Jimmy Williams will have to step up as backups. Second-rounder Shawntae Spencer should also see action.

Tony Parrish has been outstanding at strong safety for two years. Zack Bronson is expected back from injury at free safety, where Ronnie Heard backs up along with sixth-round pick Keith Lewis of Oregon.

Special teams

Grade: D

Todd Peterson survived the merry-go-round at placekicker and rookie sixth-rounder Andy Lee will handle the punting. With Wilson and Jimmy Williams finishing down the line in kickoff and punt returns, respectively, there is room for help from rookie Hamilton, who led the ACC in kickoff returns with a 31-yard average at Clemson last season.

Management

Grade: B-

Owner John York, General Manager Terry Donahue and Erickson now have all their own people in place. They moved down smartly in the draft and came up with 10 picks, and soon will regain enough salary-cap space to continue the process of starting over.

Bottom line

It's rebuilding time in San Francisco, a reality this team hasn't faced too often in more than two decades. There is talent on defense, but if this bunch makes the playoffs this time around, Erickson should get Coach-of-the-Year votes.

FINAL GRADE **84**

49ERS ROSTER

Dennis Erickson, head coach

Dan Cozzetto, TEs; **Jamie Christian,** def. quality control; **Tim Lappano,** RBs; **Larry MacDuff,** special teams coord.; **Greg McMackin,** asst. head coach/LBs; **Rich Olson,** QBs; **Dan Quinn,** def. line; **Willy Robinson,** def. coord.; **Jeff Rodgers,** special teams quality control; **Al Simmons,** asst. secondary; **Gregg Smith,** asst. head coach/off. line; **Jason Tarver,** asst. RBs/off. asst.; **Ted Tollner,** off. coord.; **Ron Lynn,** secondary; **Scott Swartz,** off. quality control

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
11	Doman, Brandon	QB	6-1	210	12-29-1976	0	Brigham Young
7	Dorsey, Ken	QB	6-4	205	4-22-1981	0	Miami (FL)
13	Rattay, Tim	QB	6-1	200	3-15-1977	4	Louisiana Tech

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
76	Davis, Jerome	T	6-5	290	2-4-1974	2	Minnesota
78	Gragg, Scott	T	6-8	315	2-28-1972	9	Montana
52	Gutierrez, Brock	C	6-3	304	9-25-1973	7	Central Michigan
77	Harris, Kwame	T	6-7	310	3-15-1982	1	Stanford
66	Heitmann, Eric	G	6-3	305	2-24-1980	2	Stanford
69	Kosier, Kyle	T	6-5	293	1-27-1978	2	Arizona State
67	Ledford, Dwayne	C	6-4	300	11-2-1976	2	East Carolina
68	Murphy, Rob	C	6-5	310	1-18-1977	2	Ohio State
62	Newberry, Jeremy	C	6-5	310	3-23-1976	5	California
	Randall, Greg	T	6-5	322	6-23-1978	4	Michigan State
79	Rehberg, Scott	T	6-8	325	11-17-1973	7	Central Michigan

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
32	Barlow, Kevan	RB	6-1	238	1-7-1979	3	Pittsburgh
40	Beasley, Fred	RB	6-1	246	9-18-1974	6	Auburn
41	Isom, Jasen	RB	6-1	243	1-7-1977	1	Western Illinois
22	Jackson, Terry	RB	6-1	232	1-10-1976	5	Florida
25	Robertson, Jamal	RB	5-10	210	1-10-1977	2	Ohio Northern

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
83	Battle, Arnaz	WR	6-1	217	2-22-1980	1	Notre Dame
19	Bruce, Arland	WR	5-10	193	11-23-1977	1	Minnesota
15	Herzing, Adam	WR	6-2	197	9-23-1980	0	Cal Poly
87	Hill, Kahlil	WR	6-2	200	3-18-1979	1	Iowa
86	Jennings, Brian	TE	6-5	245	10-14-1976	4	Arizona State
82	Johnson, Eric	TE	6-3	256	9-15-1979	2	Yale
18	Jordan, James	WR	6-2	225	6-11-1978	2	Louisiana Tech
85	Lloyd, Brandon	WR	6-1	184	7-5-1981	1	Illinois
49	Walker, Aaron	TE	6-6	252	3-14-1980	1	Florida
84	Wilson, Cedrick	WR	5-10	183	12-17-1978	3	Tennessee

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
91	Adams, Anthony	DT	6-1	300	8-18-1980	1	Penn State
96	Carter, Andre	DE	6-4	265	5-12-1979	3	California
63	Demaree, Chris	DE	6-3	268	3-12-1980	1	Kentucky
95	Engelberger, John	DE	6-4	268	10-18-1976	4	Virginia Tech
93	Landry, Michael	DT	6-4	265	12-12-1978	0	Southern University
98	Mitrione, Matt	DT	6-2	295	7-15-1978	1	Purdue
93	Shaw, Josh	DT	6-2	290	9-7-1979	1	Michigan State
	Whiting, Brandon	DE	6-3	285	7-30-1976	6	California
94	Williams, Andrew	DE	6-2	263	4-18-1979	1	Miami (FL)
97	Young, Bryant	DT	6-3	291	1-27-1972	10	Notre Dame

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
31	Bronson, Zack	S	6-1	204	1-28-1974	7	McNeese State
32	Carlyle, Calvin	CB	5-11	186	9-12-1979	0	Oregon State
35	Carpenter, Dwaine	S	6-1	203	11-04-1976	1	North Carolina A&T
38	Heard, Ronnie	S	6-3	215	10-5-1976	4	Mississippi
26	Holman, Rashad	CB	5-11	191	1-17-1978	3	Louisville
33	Parrish, Tony	S	6-1	210	11-23-1975	6	Washington
29	Plummer, Ahmed	CB	6-1	191	3-26-1976	4	Ohio State
24	Rumph, Mike	CB	6-2	205	11-8-1979	2	Miami (FL)
23	Williams, Jimmy	CB	5-11	190	3-10-1979	3	Vanderbilt

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
57	Anthony, Cornelius	LB	6-1	235	7-3-1978	2	Texas A&M
56	Moore, Brandon	LB	6-1	242	1-16-1979	2	Oklahoma
98	Peterson, Julian	LB	6-3	235	7-28-1978	4	Michigan State
51	Rasheed, Saleem	LB	6-2	229	6-15-1981	2	Alabama
50	Smith, Derek	LB	6-2	245	1-18-1975	7	Arizona State
53	Ulbrich, Jeff	LB	6-1	249	2-17-1977	4	Hawaii
55	Winborn, Jamie	LB	5-11	242	5-14-1979	3	Vanderbilt

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
5	Boyd, Danny	K	6-1	213	6-1-1978	1	LSU
10	Filipovic, Filip	P	6-2	216	11-5-1977	1	South Dakota
4	LaFleur, Bill	P	6-1	204	2-25-1976	2	Nebraska
2	Peterson, Todd	K	5-10	177	2-4-1970	10	Georgia

DOUG HOLLEMAN

JOE ROBBINS

PROJECTED STARTERS

	OFFENSE
QB	Tim Rattay
FB	Fred Beasley
RB	Kevan Barlow
LT	Kwame Harris
LG	Eric Heitmann
C	Jeremy Newberry
RG	Kyle Kosier
RT	Scott Gragg
TE	Eric Johnson
WR	Brandon Lloyd
WR	Rashaun Woods

	DEFENSE
LE	Brandon Whiting
LT	Anthony Adams
RT	Bryant Young
RE	Andre Carter
LLB	Julian Peterson
MLB	Derek Smith
RLB	Jeff Ulbrich
LCB	Ahmed Plummer
RCB	Mike Rumph
SS	Tony Parrish
FS	Zack Bronson

	SPECIAL TEAMS
P	Andy Lee
K	Todd Peterson
PR	Jimmy Williams
KR	Cedrick Wilson

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	31	Woods, Rashaun	WR	6-2	202	10-17-80	Oklahoma State
2	14	Smiley, Justin	G	6-3	301	11-11-81	Alabama
2	26	Spencer, Shawntae	CB	6-1	176	2-22-82	Pittsburgh
3	14	Hamilton, Derrick	WR	6-3	203	11-30-81	Clemson
4	8	Sopoaga, Isaac	DT	6-2	321	9-4-81	Hawaii
4	31	Seigler, Richard	LB	6-2	238	10-19-80	Oregon State
6	23	Lee, Andy	P	6-1	206	8-11-82	Pittsburgh
6	33	Lewis, Keith	S	6-1	202	10-20-81	Oregon
7	16	Pickett, Cody	QB	6-3	227	6-30-80	Washington
7	25	Ferrara, Christian	DT	6-3	294	12-21-81	Syracuse

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 vs. Atlanta		
Sept. 12	4:15	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 2 @ New Orleans		
Sept. 19	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 3 @ Seattle		
Sept. 26	4:15	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 4 vs. St. Louis		
Oct. 3	8:30	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 5 vs. Arizona		
Oct. 10	4:15	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 6 @ New York Jets		
Oct. 17	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 7 OPEN DATE		
WEEK 8 @ Chicago		
Oct. 31	8:30	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 9 vs. Seattle		
Nov. 7	4:05	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 10 vs. Carolina		
Nov. 14	4:15	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 11 @ Tampa Bay		
Nov. 21	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 12 vs. Miami		
Nov. 28	4:15	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 13 @ St. Louis		
Dec. 5	1:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 14 @ Arizona		
Dec. 12	4:15	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 15 vs. Washington		
Dec. 18	5:00	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 16 vs. Buffalo		
Dec. 26	4:05	
W / L	Score:	
WEEK 17 @ New England		
Jan. 2	1:00	
W / L	Score:	

All times Eastern

ARIZONA CARDINALS

Street & Smith's PRESEASON PICK: 4 2003 RECORD: 4-12

KEY OFFSEASON ADDITIONS

- **Obafemi Ayanbadejo, RB** (MIA)
- **Bertrand Berry, DE** (DEN)
- **Shaun King, QB** (TB)
- **David Macklin, CB** (IND)
- **Karl Williams, WR** (TB)
- **Riall Johnson, LB** (CIN)

STADIUM FACTS

Sun Devil Stadium

Capacity: **73,379** Turf: **Grass**
Tickets: **602-379-0102**
Web site: **www.azcardinals.com**

Avg. Attendance **36,062**	NFL Avg. **66,688**
% Capacity **49.4**	NFL Avg. **94.9**
Avg. Ticket **$35.99**	NFL Avg. **$52.95**
Parking **$5.00**	NFL Avg. **$14.09**
Hot Dog **$3.50**	NFL Avg. **$3.32**
Beer / Size **$5.00 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$5.21 / 17oz.**
Soda / Size **$2.50 / 16oz.**	NFL Avg. **$3.05 / 19oz.**

QUICK HITS

FACT: Arizona has had a different player lead the team in receptions in each of the past five seasons.

STAT: The Cardinals' conversion on fourth-and-25 on the final play against the Vikings in Week 17 was the second-longest fourth-down conversion in the league last year during the regular season.

LOOK IT UP: Jim Hanifan, who served as Cardinals coach from 1980-85, is the only head man in the franchise's 84-year history to guide the club for more than five consecutive seasons.

THE COUNT:
256 – Emmitt Smith's rushing yards in 2003, good for 61st in the NFL.
5 – Times the Cards have had one of the top three picks in the draft since 1993.
23.6 – Cardinals' average margin of defeat on the road last season.

New coach Green sees something few have noticed in Bidwill's Cardinals—potential

Unproven McCown now owns keys to drive Arizona offense

Dennis Green brings an impressive track record, which is something foreign at Arizona. As usual with the constant stream of Cardinal coaches, Green must start at the bottom and work his way up.

Convinced that untested Josh McCown is his answer at quarterback, the Cardinals can only hope they uncover more young phenoms like last year's Rookie of the Year, receiver Anquan Boldin.

"It's a turnaround thing. I like turning around programs," Green says. "That's my thing, to take programs that people aren't real convinced about and to show what they can be."

Green is not afraid to talk about a bright future despite a dim past.

"I've said right from the start that we want to go to the playoffs the first year," he says. "That's our goal, and I'll be very disappointed if we don't."

Offensive line — Grade: B-

One of the first things Green did was anoint right guard Leonard Davis his new left guard and challenge him to become the best in the league. He thinks Davis and left tackle L.J. Shelton will lead the Cardinals' weakside running attack to new levels. Cameron Spikes, who started 16 games at left guard, will move to the right side and compete with Reggie Wells.

Right tackle Anthony Clement also started every game and Shelton missed only one. Former guard Pete Kendall was solid at center for 13 starts until hampered by injury. Frank Garcia and Raleigh Roundtree are experienced backups and rookie Alex Stepanovich can play center or guard.

Quarterbacks — Grade: C

Green showed his confidence in the inexperienced McCown by passing up outstanding prospects in the draft. He signed Tampa Bay's Shaun King as a backup. In only

Marcel Shipp, RB

three starts at the end of the season, McCown demonstrated enough moxie and athleticism to whet Green's appetite for more.

"I like guys that have to prove themselves on the football field. The Rich Gannons of the world, the Jake Delhommes of the world, the Marc Bulgers, the Tom Bradys. They're stubborn," Green says. "They don't care what anybody else thinks about them. They think they're good."

Seventh-round pick John Navarre might fit into that category as another unsung prospect from Michigan.

Running backs

Grade: C

Although Green says Emmitt Smith can continue to help his young team, Marcel Shipp will continue as the starter. Shipp's average per carry of 3.6 yards was better than Smith's 2.8, but the Cardinals finished 29th in rushing so improvement obviously is mandatory.

"Marcel is tough, he's very strong," Green says. "I think Marcel Shipp running in behind Leonard Davis will get you some decent yards."

Newcomer Obafemi Ayanbadejo from Miami will join James Hodgins at the fullback position, but the Cardinals need more firepower from the tailback spot.

Receivers

Grade: B

Former Vikings ballboy Larry Fitzgerald was Green's man from the start in the draft. Now, all the former Pitt star must do is live up to the considerable example of last year's second-round pick, Boldin. With 101 catches, Boldin became the most prolific rookie receiver in NFL history. Green is moving him from flanker to split end in an effort to reduce double teams.

Fitzgerald was the first receiver picked in one of the all-time great receiver classes, so he arrives with more expectations than Boldin had.

Last year's top pick, Bryant Johnson, will fight for playing time with Bryan Gilmore and Nathan Poole, the hero in the season finale against Minnesota. Tight end Freddie Jones was the team's second-leading receiver with 55 catches.

NUMBERS

Category	Team Stats	NFL Rank
Total Offense	280.6	27
Rushing	95.7	29
Passing	184.9	23
Scoring	225	32
Punt Returns	6.4	30
Kick Returns	22.9	7
Red Zone TD %	41.9	30T
Total Defense	344.0	26
Against Rush	119.7	19
Against Pass	224.3	29
Points Allowed	452	32
Interceptions	13	25T
Sacks	21	30
Turnover Diff.	-13	30

FIRST DOWNS

Total	Rush	Pass	Penalty
256	80	147	29

RED ZONE OFFENSE

Poss.	Pts.	TD	FG
43	166	18	14

TOUCHDOWNS

Rush	Pass	Ret.	Def.
5	18	2	1

CARDINALS' BEST-EVER QBs

1. **JIM HART**
   Career Passing Yards: **34,665**
   Career TD Passes: **209**
2. **NEIL LOMAX**
   Career Passing Yards: **22,771**
   Career TD Passes: **136**
3. **JAKE PLUMMER**
   Career Passing Yards: **19,812**
   Career TD Passes: **105**

JONATHAN DANIEL/GETTY IMAGES

Defensive line

Grade: C

Not satisfied with 16-game starter and rookie Calvin Pace at right end after only one sack, the Cardinals made 11.5-sack specialist Bertrand Berry of Denver a free-agent priority. He is expected to push Pace and force Kyle Vanden Bosch to the left side, provided Vanden Bosch can return from a knee injury. Fred Wakefield and Dennis Johnson also remain in the mix at end.

Former top draft choice Wendell Bryant will try to make an impact as an under tackle after starting only five games last season. John Randle produced from that spot in Minnesota. Russell Davis started 15 games at tackle and Marcus Bell 10. Rookies Darnell Dockett and Antonio Smith will get long looks and probably figure into playing rotations as soon as possible.

Linebackers

Grade: C

Ray Thompson and Ronald McKinnon remain adequate playmakers at two of the starting linebacker spots and second-rounder Karlos Dansby is expected to step in immediately. Levar Fisher, Gerald Hayes, LeVar Woods and James Darling lend more depth than most teams.

Silver linings and control attracted Dennis Green to the Valley of the Sun

Dennis Green could have continued his low-pressure, high-paying role as a television analyst. If he wanted to coach again, he could have searched out a talented team that just needed a push, much like close friend Tony Dungy did with the Indianapolis Colts.

Head coaches who join teams like the Arizona Cardinals usually are anxious for their first jobs or desperate for another chance. So when Green issued the familiar "looking-for-a-challenge" spin at his introductory news conference, it was hard not to take him at face value.

After all, Green posted a 97-62 record in Minnesota, won four division titles and reached the postseason eight times. With seven coaching jobs open, he was the most accomplished candidate, at least until Joe Gibbs came out of retirement.

Green interviewed with the Redskins and Raiders, one of four jobs still vacant when he signed on with Arizona. No team, ironically, could offer as attractive a package as the hapless Cardinals.

Green wanted significant control over personnel decisions, something Oakland's Al Davis and Washington's Dan Snyder would never relinquish but that Cardinals owner Bill Bidwell had no problem delegating. Green liked the parallels to Dungy, who inherited the laughingstock Buccaneers in 1996 and had them in the playoffs by the time they moved into a new stadium two years later. The Cardinals will open their new facility in 2006.

Dennis Green

Green started seven different quarterbacks in the playoffs in Minnesota and liked the idea of beginning from scratch at the position in Phoenix. Having the No. 3 overall draft pick (Larry Fitzgerald) was also attractive.

Not that the job doesn't have drawbacks. The Cardinals have had just one winning year since 1984, one playoff appearance since 1982 and one postseason victory since winning the NFL title in 1947 as the Chicago Cardinals. Last year's team finished 4-12, losing all eight road games.

If Green wanted a challenge, he'll get one in Arizona. But with his track record, Arizona's high draft picks and a new stadium on the way, Green might prove to have more of a stacked deck than a house of Cards.

—Pete Williams

GARY WILLIAMS/GETTY IMAGES

2003 FINAL STATS

Won 4, Lost 12

DATE	W/L	SCORE	OPPONENT
09/07	L	42-24	at Detroit
09/14	L	38-0	Seattle
09/21	W	20-13	Green Bay
09/28	L	37-13	at St. Louis
10/05	L	24-7	at Dallas
10/12	L	26-18	Baltimore
10/26	W	16-13 (OT)	San Francisco
11/02	W	17-14	Cincinnati
11/09	L	28-15	at Pittsburgh
11/16	L	44-6	at Cleveland
11/23	L	30-27 (OT)	St. Louis
11/30	L	28-3	at Chicago
12/07	L	50-14	at San Francisco
12/14	L	20-17	Carolina
12/21	L	28-10	at Seattle
12/28	W	18-17	Minnesota

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Shipp	228	830	3.6	36	0
Smith	90	256	2.8	22	2
Blake	30	177	5.9	19	2
McCown	28	158	5.6	16t	1
Anderson	18	68	3.8	17	0
Boldin	5	40	8.0	23	0
Hodgins	2	6	3.0	3	0
Gilmore	1	0	0.0	0	0
Kasper	1	-4	-4.0	-4	0
Cardinals	**403**	**1531**	**3.8**	**36**	**5**
Opponents	**475**	**1915**	**4.0**	**52**	**17**

RECEIVING	REC	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Boldin	101	1377	13.6	71t	8
Jones	55	517	9.4	34	3
B. Johnson	35	438	12.5	54t	1
Shipp	30	184	6.1	34	0
Gilmore	17	208	12.2	32	2
Smith	14	107	7.6	36	0
Hodgins	14	58	4.1	9	2
Poole	13	177	13.6	37	1
Bush	11	71	6.5	14	1
Anderson	6	36	6.0	11	0
McAddley	4	53	13.3	25	0
Kasper	1	23	23.0	23	0
Scobey	1	9	9.0	9	0
Foster	1	7	7.0	7	0
Cardinals	**303**	**3265**	**10.8**	**71t**	**18**
Opponents	**311**	**3686**	**11.9**	**68t**	**29**

PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	INT
Blake	367	208	2247	13	15
McCown	166	95	1018	5	6
Boldin	1	0	0	0	1
Cardinals	**534**	**303**	**3265**	**18**	**22**
Opponents	**497**	**311**	**3686**	**29**	**13**

SACKS

D. Johnson 3.0, Thompson 3.0, Darling 2.0, Hill 2.0, King 2.0, McKinnon 2.0, Bell 1.0, R. Davis 1.0, Fisher 1.0, Pace 1.0, Tanner 1.0, Wakefield 1.0, Woods 1.0

Cardinals 21.0, Opponents 44.0

t=touchdown

Dexter Jackson, FS

Fisher started 15 games last season but is recovering from surgery on both knees, leaving the door open for Dansby.

Secondary

Grade: C+

David Macklin arrived from Indianapolis to replace departed David Barrett at cornerback opposite Duane Starks, assuming Starks comes back strong from a season-ending knee injury. Starks was replaced by Renaldo Hill, who had five interceptions and will push Macklin or continue to play until Starks is ready. Fifth-year man Coby Rhinehart is a capable backup.

Adrian Wilson and Dexter Jackson started all but one game in tandem at the safety spots, providing unusual continuity. Jackson's career-high six interceptions made his acquisition from Tampa worthwhile. Quentin Harris is the backup.

Special teams

Grade: C-

The arrival of Karl Williams from Tampa should improve the punt-return team and enable Boldin to give up his punt-return duties. Second-year running back Josh Scobey had a 100-yard kickoff return. Neil Rackers replaced Bill Gramatica as the placekicker after a back injury shelved Gramatica. Punter Scott Player remains one of the team's most consistent players.

Management

Grade: C+

Green is accustomed to running his own show, but after two seasons away from the game he seems happy to return in a different structure under Vice President of Football Operations Rod Graves and the Bidwill family. It is an organization with an unenviable track record, so Green's presence can do nothing but improve its chances.

Bottom line

Improvement is all the Cardinals can hope for. There will be no magical playoff breakthrough like there was in Dallas with the arrival of Bill Parcells. Not even a rejuvenated Emmitt Smith could pull off a miracle. Under fired coach Dave McGinnis, the Cardinals got off rock bottom and started bouncing the other direction. Still, Green takes over the first NFL team since 1987 to finish last in both points scored and points allowed.

FINAL GRADE 79

CARDINALS ROSTER

Dennis Green, head coach

Mike Kruczek, quarterbacks; **Alex Wood**, offensive coordinator; **Kirby Wilson**, running backs; **Richard Solomon**, defensive backs; **Bob Wylie**, offensive line; **Clancy Pendergast**, defensive coordinator; **Frank Bush**, linebackers; **Robert Ford**, receivers; **Donald Pollard**, defensive line; **Kevin O'Dea**, special teams; **Rick Courtright**, def. quality control; **Bill Khayat**, off. quality control; **Mike Wilson**, tight ends

#	QUARTERBACK		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
	King, Shaun	QB	6-1	215	5-29-1977	5	Tulane
12	McCown, Josh	QB	6-4	212	7-4-1979	2	Sam Houston State
15	Parsons, Preston	QB	6-4	232	2-19-1979	0	Northern Arizona

#	OFFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
65	Clement, Anthony	T	6-8	333	4-10-1976	6	Louisiana-Lafayette
75	Davis, Leonard	G	6-6	384	9-5-1978	3	Texas
63	Garcia, Frank	C	6-2	302	1-28-1972	9	Washington
64	Grace, Steven	C	6-3	292	2-13-1979	1	Arizona
66	Kendall, Pete	C	6-5	279	7-9-1973	8	Boston College
78	Rogers, Kendrick	T	6-5	311	10-10-1976	0	Alabama A&M
73	Roundtree, Raleigh	G	6-4	295	8-31-1975	5	South Carolina State
70	Shelton, L.J.	T	6-6	335	3-21-1976	5	Eastern Michigan
76	Spikes, Cameron	G	6-4	325	11-6-1976	5	Texas A&M
74	Wells, Reggie	T	6-4	298	11-3-1980	1	Clarion
71	Whiting, Teag	G	6-3	310	4-16-1979	1	Brigham Young
68	Wragge, Tony	G	6-4	320	8-14-1979	1	New Mexico State

#	RUNNING BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
20	Anderson, Damien	RB	5-11	212	7-17-1979	2	Northwestern
30	Ayanbadejo, Obafemi	RB	6-2	235	3-5-1975	5	San Diego State
42	Hodgins, James	RB	6-1	274	4-30-1977	5	San Jose State
46	Rue, Joshua	RB	6-3	245	8-19-1979	0	Duquesne
33	Scobey, Josh	RB	6-1	222	12-11-1979	1	Kansas State
31	Shipp, Marcel	RB	5-11	230	8-8-1978	3	Massachusetts
22	Smith, Emmitt	RB	5-10	221	5-15-1969	14	Florida

#	RECEIVERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
84	Banks, Mike	TE	6-4	262	11-5-1979	2	Iowa State
81	Boldin, Anquan	WR	6-1	218	10-3-1980	1	Florida State
87	Bush, Steve	TE	6-3	280	7-4-1974	7	Arizona State
49	Diamond, Lorenzo	TE	6-2	253	12-15-1978	0	Auburn
86	Gilmore, Bryan	WR	6-1	200	7-21-1978	4	Midwestern State
48	Hodel, Nathan	TE	6-2	249	11-12-1977	2	Illinois
83	Johnson, Bryant	WR	6-2	214	3-7-1981	1	Penn State
85	Jones, Freddie	TE	6-4	260	9-16-1974	7	North Carolina
82	Kasper, Kevin	WR	6-1	197	12-23-1977	3	Iowa
80	McAddley, Jason	WR	6-2	200	7-28-1979	2	Alabama
89	Poole, Nathan	WR	6-2	210	2-1-1977	2	Marshall
	Williams, Karl	WR	5-10	177	4-10-1971	8	Texas A&M-Kingsville

#	DEFENSIVE LINE		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
94	Bell, Marcus	DT	6-2	339	6-1-1979	3	Memphis
	Berry, Bertrand	DE	6-3	250	8-15-1975	6	Notre Dame
91	Bryant, Wendell	DT	6-5	303	9-12-1980	2	Wisconsin
98	Davis, Russell	DT	6-4	314	3-28-1975	5	North Carolina
96	Johnson, Dennis	DE	6-5	269	12-4-1979	2	Kentucky
72	King, Kenny	DE	6-3	285	4-23-1981	1	Alabama
92	Kolodziej, Ross	DT	6-2	295	5-11-1978	2	Wisconsin
79	Pace, Calvin	DE	6-4	262	10-28-1980	1	Wake Forest
92	Tanner, Barron	DT	6-3	360	9-14-1973	6	Oklahoma
93	Vanden Bosch, Kyle	DE	6-4	282	11-17-1978	2	Nebraska
97	Wakefield, Fred	DE	6-7	288	9-17-1978	3	Illinois

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
35	Carter, Dyshod	CB	5-10	195	6-18-1978	1	Kansas State
29	Harris, Quentin	S	6-1	214	1-26-1977	2	Syracuse
21	Hill, Renaldo	CB	5-11	194	11-12-1978	3	Michigan State
34	Jackson, Dexter	S	6-1	205	7-28-1977	5	Florida State
41	Lucas, Justin	S	5-10	211	7-15-1976	5	Abilene Christian
27	Macklin, David	CB	5-9	196	7-14-1978	4	Penn State
23	Rhinehart, Coby	CB	5-11	198	2-7-1977	4	Southern Methodist
28	Starks, Duane	CB	5-10	172	5-23-1974	5	Miami (FL)
44	Stone, Michael	CB	5-11	199	2-13-1978	2	Memphis
26	Tate, Robert	CB	5-10	193	10-19-1973	6	Cincinnati
24	Wilson, Adrian	S	6-3	222	10-12-1979	3	North Carolina State

#	LINEBACKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
51	Darling, James	LB	6-1	247	12-29-1974	7	Washington State
52	Fisher, Levar	LB	6-1	239	7-2-1979	2	North Carolina State
54	Hayes, Gerald	LB	6-1	237	10-10-1980	1	Pittsburgh
50	Johnson, Riall	LB	6-3	243	4-20-1978	3	Stanford
57	McKinnon, Ronald	LB	6-1	245	9-20-1973	8	North Alabama
55	Thompson, Ray	LB	6-3	224	11-21-1977	4	Tennessee
56	Woods, LeVar	LB	6-3	244	3-15-1978	3	Iowa
53	Young, Michael	LB	6-2	245	6-1-1978	2	Illinois

#	KICKERS		HT	WT	BORN	EXP.	COLLEGE
7	Gramatica, Bill	K	5-10	189	7-10-1978	3	South Florida
10	Player, Scott	P	6-1	213	12-17-1969	6	Florida State
1	Rackers, Neil	K	6-1	205	8-16-1976	4	Illinois

TOM HOOD/AP WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

JOHN CORDES/TSN/ICON SMI

PROJECTED STARTERS

OFFENSE

QB	Josh McCown
FB	James Hodgins
RB	Marcel Shipp
LT	L.J. Shelton
LG	Leonard Davis
C	Pete Kendall
RG	Cameron Spikes
RT	Anthony Clement
TE	Freddie Jones
WR	Anquan Boldin
WR	Larry Fitzgerald

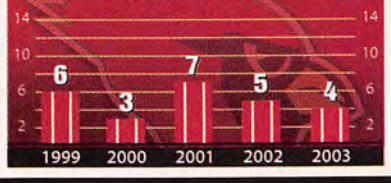
DEFENSE

LE	Kyle Vanden Bosch
LT	Wendell Bryant
RT	Russell Davis
RE	Bertrand Berry
LLB	Karlos Dansby
MLB	Ronald McKinnon
RLB	Ray Thompson
LCB	Renaldo Hill
RCB	David Macklin
SS	Adrian Wilson
FS	Dexter Jackson

SPECIAL TEAMS

P	Neil Rackers
K	Scott Player
PR	Karl Williams
KR	Josh Scobey

FIVE-YEAR WINS TREND



SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 @ St. Louis	
Sept. 12	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 2 vs. New England	
Sept. 19	4:15
W / L	Score:
WEEK 3 @ Atlanta	
Sept. 26	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 4 vs. New Orleans	
Oct. 3	4:05
W / L	Score:
WEEK 5 @ San Francisco	
Oct. 10	4:15
W / L	Score:
WEEK 6 OPEN DATE	
WEEK 7 vs. Seattle	
Oct. 24	4:15
W / L	Score:
WEEK 8 @ Buffalo	
Oct. 31	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 9 @ Miami	
Nov. 7	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 10 vs. New York Giants	
Nov. 14	4:15
W / L	Score:
WEEK 11 @ Carolina	
Nov. 21	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 12 vs. New York Jets	
Nov. 28	4:15
W / L	Score:
WEEK 13 @ Detroit	
Dec. 5	1:00
W / L	Score:
WEEK 14 vs. San Francisco	
Dec. 12	4:15
W / L	Score:
WEEK 15 vs. St. Louis	
Dec. 19	4:05
W / L	Score:
WEEK 16 @ Seattle	
Dec. 26	4:15
W / L	Score:
WEEK 17 vs. Tampa Bay	
Jan. 2	4:05
W / L	Score:

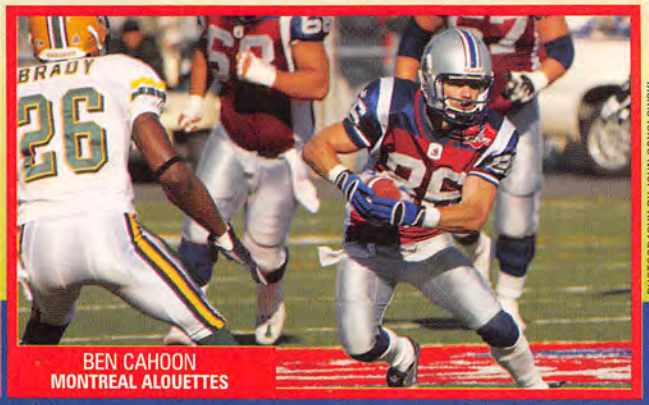
All times Eastern

AFC EAST AFC NORTH AFC SOUTH AFC WEST NFC EAST NFC NORTH NFC SOUTH NFC WEST

2004 DRAFTEES

RD	PICK	NAME	POS	HT	WT	DOB	COLLEGE
1	3	Fitzgerald, Larry	WR	6-2	223	8-31-83	Pittsburgh
2	1	Dansby, Karlos	LB	6-3	251	11-3-81	Auburn
3	1	Dockett, Darnell	DE	6-3	277	5-27-81	Florida State
4	4	Stepanovich, Alex	C	6-3	301	9-25-81	Ohio State
5	3	Smith, Antonio	DE	6-3	274	10-21-81	Oklahoma State
6	2	Leckey, Nick	C	6-2	290	3-12-82	Kansas State
7	1	Navarre, John	QB	6-6	246	9-9-80	Michigan

MIKE PRINGLE
EDMONTON ESKIMOS



BEN CAHOON
MONTREAL ALOUETTES

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN SOKOLOWSKI

CANADIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE PREVIEW

KEY ARGOS

Despite last year's off-the-field turmoil, Toronto's on-the-field product is good enough to land a Grey Cup.

By RICK MATSUMOTO, Toronto Star

A strange thing—even for the CFL—happened on the way to last year's Grey Cup game.

Not one, but two, franchises were revoked by the league during the course of the season when their owners ran out of money, unable to stem the tide of red ink flooding their books.

First to hear rookie commissioner Tom Wright knocking on the door and asking for the keys was Toronto Argonauts owner Sherwood Schwarz. He was talked into spending some of the fortune he made in the insurance business in Manhattan to buy the Argos by his cousin, J.I. Albrecht, who had been in and out of the CFL for three decades as a scout, personnel director and GM of several teams.

In three and a half years as Argos owner, Schwarz lost 18 million Canadian dollars. Finally, in July, he declared he wasn't going to spend any more of his children's inheritance in Canada. When he missed a payroll, the league stepped in.

Schwarz now refers to Albrecht as his "ex-cousin."

A month after taking over the Argos, the league was forced to take similar measures down the road in Hamilton, Ontario, when Tiger-Cats owners David Macdonald and George Grant failed to meet a payroll. Unlike Schwarz, the Ti-Cat duo had not poured millions into its franchise in recent years, and the product on the field had crumbled badly. The Ti-Cats were on their way to a league record for futility when Wright pulled the plug.

The Ti-Cats eventually finished with a 1-17 mark. Several other teams in league history had managed only a single win in a season, but the 'Cats were the first to lose that many times.

Oddly enough, the demise of the two ownerships may turn out to be the best thing that has happened to the league in some time. Both the Argos and Ti-Cats now have financially solid, local ownership.

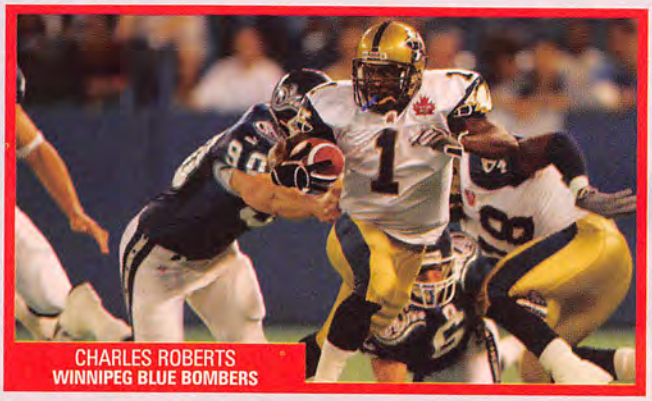
In Howard Sokolowski and David Cynamon, the Argos have a successful real estate developer and the owner of a firm that makes household cleaning products, respectively, who are prepared to build a new 25,000-seat stadium with or without partners. The plan is to take the team out of the cavernous SkyDome, which has lost its appeal with football fans.

"It's an extraordinary brand that has been underperforming for a number of years," Sokolowski says. "We're not here for the short term; we're here for the long term. We do believe that there's a very strong opportunity here as a business, or else we would not have been interested.

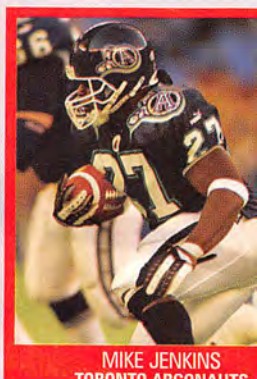
"I think the Argos have been homeless for the last 20 years. We've brought them home now."

New owner Bob Young is a Hamilton native who grew up watching the Ti-Cats before building a North Carolina computer software business into a multimillion-dollar enterprise.

Young immediately injected much-needed cash and fresh ideas into the franchise,



CHARLES ROBERTS
WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS



MIKE JENKINS
TORONTO ARGONAUTS

giving both tired Ivor Wynne Stadium and the on-field product a new look.

"As a fan of the Ti-Cats for 30 years, I'm probably different from many of the fans who have been frustrated by the game on the field," Young says. "I've been frustrated with the game off the field.

"It's a brilliant brand, but it's been marketed the same way for 30 years. A marketing plan that worked in 1976 to fill Ivor Wynne Stadium needs to be updated just a little bit."

With the two new owners on board, Wright, who is entering his second season at the helm of the CFL, speaks confidently of a stable league. Despite the blips on the radar from last season in Hamilton and Toronto, league officials say the outlook for prosperity is good.

For the first time in more than a decade, the Saskatchewan Roughriders, who hosted a very successful Grey Cup in November, and the Winnipeg Blue Bombers are debt-free. Attendance has improved in Vancouver and the reborn Ottawa franchise appears to be planting solid roots in the capital.

The success of the Edmonton Eskimos and the Montreal Alouettes, whom the Eskimos destroyed in the Grey Cup game, remains the envy of the other clubs both on and off the field.

"For the first time in years we have nine solid franchises," Wright says.

He speaks cautiously about adding a fifth team in the East to balance the two divisions and give the league coast-to-coast presence. Halifax would be the ideal site for a 10th team, but with the soaring popularity of football in Quebec, Quebec City is also mentioned prominently.

Wright has formed an expansion committee but is proceeding slowly. He's all too familiar with the rash expansion into the U.S. in the early '90s, which died a swift and painful death after just three years.

Making sure Toronto and Hamilton get back on their feet, putting teeth into policing the salary cap and improving officiating will provide enough fodder for Wright to feed on in his second season at the helm.

EAST DIVISION

DAMON ALLEN
TORONTO ARGONAUTS

JERMAINE COPELAND
MONTREAL ALOUETTES

1 TORONTO ARGONAUTS

The Argonauts came within a controversial Montreal Alouette touchdown of representing the East in last fall's Grey Cup game. That they came that close was a testament to the way coach Mike Clemons and his staff kept the club's monstrous off-field problems away from the players and maintained a focused, competitive, on-field product.

Now, with new ownership solidly in place, Clemons and his assistants entrenched in their jobs, almost all of last year's squad under contract plus the addition of some significant newcomers, the Argos should be strong contenders for the title.

First, however, we should take a short trip back to last season. By the end of July the franchise was in shambles. The league had taken over the franchise when owner Sherwood Schwarz declined to put any more money into an operation that had already lost him millions. The league appointed an interim manager with strict instructions to keep spending to an absolute minimum.

The cost-cutting started with the firing of personnel director Greg Mohns and ended with the team abandoning the scouting of NFL camps. In the meantime, the team's practice roster was reduced to bare bones. Amidst all this, the team had an epidemic of injuries that resulted in many players "playing hurt."

So the Argos advancing to the East final undoubtedly gave Howard Sokolowski and David Cynamon, two prosperous local businessmen, reason to believe they were buying a viable franchise when they made the purchase last November.

Clemons returns as coach, while his offensive coordinator, Adam Rita, has moved upstairs as vice president of football operations and general manager. Former CFL quarterback Kent Austin was hired away from Ottawa as the new offensive coordinator.

It'll be Austin's task to mold talented young quarterback Marcus Brady into a bona fide CFL starter. But Brady must first of all unseat 41-year-old future (CFL) Hall-of-Famer Damon Allen for the No. 1 job.

Allen, who was obtained from B.C. on the eve of the 2003 season after the Lions acquired NFL cut Dave Dickenson, suffered a series of injuries that hampered his play, but also gave Brady some much-needed playing time. And it was Brady who almost got the Argos into the Grey Cup.

One of the Argos' major offseason accomplishments was Rita's ability to re-sign eight of the team's nine free agents, including All-Star punter/kicker Noel Prefontaine, receiver Tony Miles, returner Bashir Levingston, who was named CFL Special Teams Player of the Year, and, of course, Brady.

The Argos scored a major coup this spring when they outbid Edmonton to sign running back John Avery, the Ole Miss product who was the first-round draft pick of the Miami Dolphins in 1998 and in 2002 won the CFL rushing title with the Eskimos. He'll battle incumbent Mike Jenkins, who led the CFL in rushing in 2001 before going to the Houston Texans for the 2002 season and then returning to Toronto, and former Heisman Trophy winner Rashaan Salaam.

Other newcomers include receivers Robert Scott, who was formerly with the Dolphins, and ex-Calgary Stampeder Robert Johnson.

2 MONTREAL ALOUETTES

It's going to be interesting to see how the Alouettes react to their Grey Cup loss to the Edmonton Eskimos.

After all, they were almost everyone's choice to repeat as champions after romping through the regular season with a 13-5 record, with three of those losses coming in the final four weeks of the season after they had clinched the East title. But in the Grey Cup game they were manhandled and embarrassed by the Eskimos.

"I'm still not over it," says quarterback Anthony Calvillo, who lives year-round in Montreal. "In the back of my mind, it eats at me. I'll try to learn from it and figure out what went wrong. It's a long offseason when you lose."

The Als had a couple of holes punched into their lineup over the winter. Speedy Canadian wide receiver Pat Woodcock, who had returned to the club last midseason after being released by the Washington Redskins, signed with Ottawa, while defensive tackle Adriano Belli joined Hamilton.

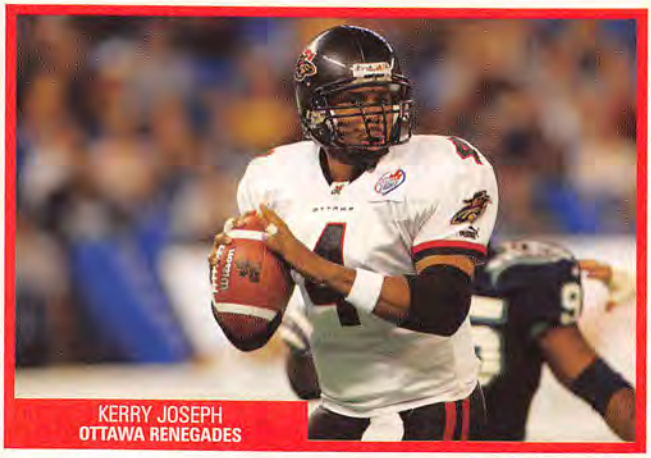
While it's always difficult to have to replace a starting Canadian with an American, the Als are deep in import receivers. That group is led by holdover and former University of Texas star Kwame Cavil, who'll likely move from slotback to his normal wide receiver spot he gave up when Woodcock joined the team last season.

Former St. Louis Ram Tony Horne and Thyron Anderson will compete for the slotback spot.

While he declined to place blame on his secondary for the Grey Cup loss after Edmonton quarterback Ricky Ray shredded it for 301 yards, Montreal coach Don Matthews knew changes had to be made. So he cut veteran and former All-Star Wayne Shaw and then exchanged defensive backs with Calgary, sending Omar Evans to the Stampeders for Kelly Malveaux.

Finally, the Als reacquired cornerback Davis Sanchez in another trade with Calgary. Sanchez starred with the Als for two years (1999-2000) before signing with San Diego Chargers.

Despite all the concerns, the Als are far from from unraveling. General Manager Jim Popp signed All-Star wide receiver Jermaine Copeland, defensive ends Anwar Stewart and Robert Brown, linebacker Kevin Johnson and slotback Ben Cahoon, who was named the CFL's top Canadian. All five were eligible to become free agents.



KERRY JOSEPH
OTTAWA RENEGADES

3 OTTAWA RENEGADES

Ottawans would like nothing better than to be not only the hosts for this year's Grey Cup—the first time they've done so since 1988—but to have their Renegades participating in the game as the East Division representative. However, for the Renegades, who rose from the dormant ashes of the defunct Ottawa Rough Riders in 2002, playing that role in only their third year of existence won't be an easy chore.

After winning just four games in their inaugural season, the Renegades improved to 7-11 last year. However, that wasn't good enough to prevent losing third place in the East to the West Division's B.C. Lions, who used their superior 11-7 record to invoke the CFL's unique "crossover rule" and grab the final playoff berth in the East.

Whether Ottawa has improved enough to secure a playoff spot this season remains to be seen. However, they'll start the season with the all-important quarterback position settled.

The Renegades gave former Seattle Seahawk defensive back Kerry Joseph the opportunity to return to the quarterback slot where he starred in college at McNeese State, and he didn't disappoint anyone despite being away from that position for five years. He took over when veteran Dan Crowley faltered and wound up completing 269 of 475 passes for 3,694 yards, the fifth-highest total in the league.

Ottawa confirmed that the job was his to lose over the offseason when it dealt impressive backup and former Ole Miss star Romaro Miller to Calgary. Darnell Kennedy will likely back up Joseph this season.

Joseph's job will be made considerably easier with the free-agent acquisition of receiver Pat Woodcock, who opted to join his hometown team rather than re-sign with the Alouettes. He'll more than make up for the loss of T.J. Flick, who jumped to Hamilton after catching 60 passes for 917 yards last season.

Josh Ranek, who was impressive after taking over the running back role from former Iowa State star Darren Davis in midseason, showed he can do damage as a receiver as well as a ball carrier.

In the trade that sent Miller to the Stampeders, the Renegades also gave up middle linebacker John Grace, defensive end Fred Perry and offensive guard Seth Dittman. In return, Ottawa received defensive lineman Kail Ellis, defensive back Anthony Malbrough, the rights to former Boston College kicker Sandro Sciortino and defensive lineman Jerry Johnson.

Getting Sciortino was important because Lawrence Tynes, who tied for the league scoring lead last season and made 82.3 percent of his field goals, left for a second try with the Kansas City Chiefs.

TIM CHEATWOOD
HAMILTON TIGER-CATS

4 HAMILTON TIGER-CATS

Talk about starting from scratch. This once-proud franchise fell to the depths of despair last season when it became the first CFL team to lose 17 games in a single season and only the fifth team in modern times to go through an entire schedule with just a single victory.

The reason for the team's demise was simple: owners David Macdonald and George Grant were running the team on a shoestring budget. As a result, the team's general manager and coach, Ron Lancaster, was unable to replace retiring players such as receivers Darren Flutie (the younger brother of Doug) and Andrew Grigg or go into the free-agent market to find a replacement for aging quarterback Danny McManus.

The Ti-Cats simply lacked talent and couldn't compete. They had lost nine consecutive games on the way to a string that would reach an even dozen when Macdonald and Grant ran out of money and the league was forced to take over a second franchise in less than a month.

But, as in the case of the Argos, the plight of the Ti-Cat owners may prove to be a blessing in disguise. After weeks of searching and negotiating, the league came up with a buyer for the franchise in wealthy (some say billionaire) Hamilton native Bob Young, who runs a computer software business in North Carolina.

The enthusiastic Young has revamped the club from top to bottom in both the football and business operations. The legendary Lancaster was relieved of his head-coaching job, but retained as director of football operations. Young went across town to McMaster University and hired the school's highly successful head coach, Greg Marshall, a former CFL running back, to replace Lancaster as the field boss. He then turned to ex-Hamilton defensive lineman David Sauve, who had become a highly successful businessman after leaving pro football, to become the team's president and CEO.

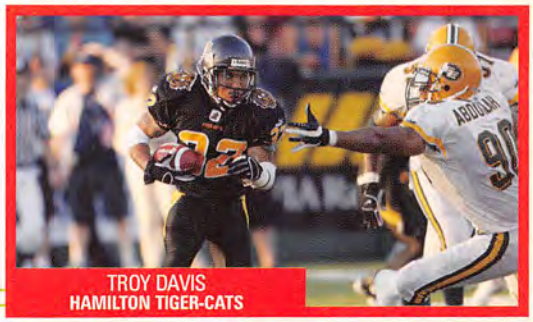
Most importantly, Young has opened his wallet. That's allowed Lancaster and Marshall to go after a number of free agents, including Alouette defensive lineman Adriano Belli, Argo slotback Mike Morealle and

Renegades' wide receiver T.J. Flick and defensive back Donovan Carter.

Lancaster was also able to convince All-Star defensive end Tim Cheatwood to re-sign with the club after he became eligible for free agency.

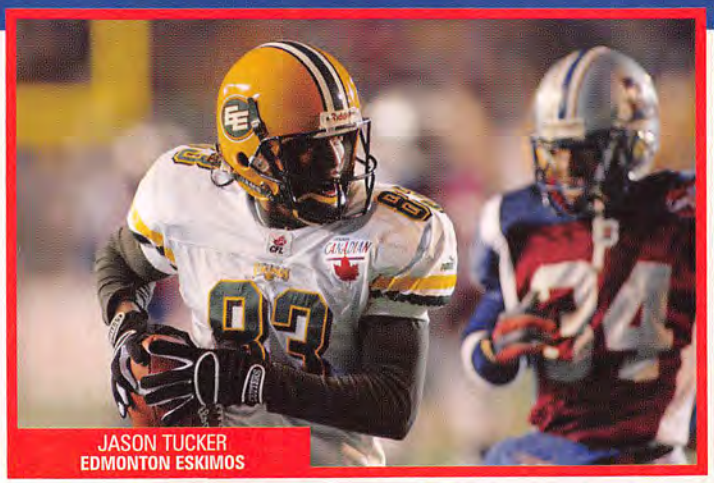
Marshall remains unconvinced that the 39-year-old McManus (Florida State) is through as a CFL quarterback and has designated him as No. 1. The Ti-Cats released last year's backup pivot, Pete Gonzalez, but have brought back third-stringer David Corley Jr. and signed CFL rookie James McPherson of Wake Forest.

One of the few bright spots on offense last season was running back Troy Davis, the former Iowa State standout whose 1,206 rushing yards were third best in the league. He and fullback Julien Radlein give the Ti-Cats a solid running game.

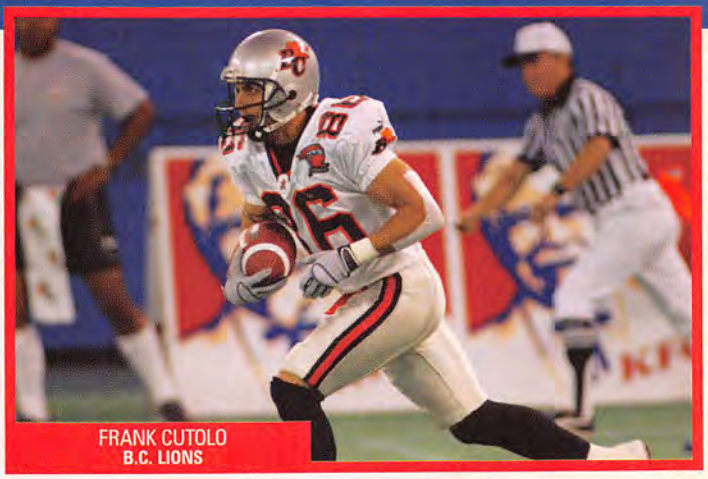


TROY DAVIS
HAMILTON TIGER-CATS

WEST DIVISION



JASON TUCKER
EDMONTON ESKIMOS



FRANK CUTOLO
B.C. LIONS

1 EDMONTON ESKIMOS

The Eskimos' efforts to retain the Grey Cup, which they wrested away from the Montreal Alouettes with a convincing 34-22 triumph last November, will literally rest on the back of Jason Maas.

Based on experience, the No. 1 quarterback job should be his going into training camp following the expected departure of Ricky Ray to the NFL. Ray, the Grey Cup hero whose 67.6 pass-completion percentage topped the league last season, signed a $1.8 million, four-year deal with the New York Jets, who added a $162,000 signing bonus to the contract. Typically, CFL players get signing inducements of $30,000-$50,000 from deep-pocketed NFL teams, who are happy to dole out that kind of money simply to bring an individual to camp. But a figure such as the one Ray received indicates he won't be returning to the Eskimos anytime soon.

Thus the Eskimos are looking to one-time starter Maas to fill the large vacancy. He lost the spot to Ray when his back gave out midway through the 2002 season.

That nagging back injury kept Maas sidelined for most of last season, but he did make some brief appearances late in the year and appeared to be healthy.

If the University of Oregon product can retain the form that saw him throw 21 TD passes in 2001, he'll be the starter. If he falters or can't stay fit, look for highly touted Bart Hendricks (Boise State), who has patiently waited on the sidelines for the past two seasons, to step into the No. 1 job.

While Ray was the prime story in Edmonton last season, a significant sidebar was being written by veteran tailback Mike Pringle, who'll return this year to lead the running attack. Released by Montreal, with whom he had played for nine seasons, Pringle signed with Edmonton and proved he wasn't finished at age 35, finishing second in the CFL rushing derby with 1,376 yards on 273 carries. He scored a league-leading 15 touchdowns, including two on receptions.

Pringle talked briefly during Grey Cup Week about retiring, but he was lured back by the prospect of becoming the CFL's all-time rushing leader. The former Cal State Fullerton star needs 834 yards to break CFL Hall-of-Famer George Reed's mark of 16,116 career rushing yards. He needs 18 touchdowns to top Reed's mark of 134 rushing scores.

The Eskimos re-signed tackle Steve Charbonneau, defensive back Donny Brady and leading receiver Jason Tucker, the reigning Grey Cup MVP. They picked up veteran safety Harold Nash, who was cut by Winnipeg, and released veteran Canadian receiver Rick Walters.

2 B.C. LIONS

There's a reunion at Vancouver's B.C. Place Stadium. It's a reuniting of former Calgary Stampeders who have flocked to the West Coast to join one-time Stampeder general manager and head coach Wally Buono. The popular Buono was unceremoniously dumped by the Stamps prior to last season after 14 years in Calgary, and he wound up holding similar posts with the Lions.

He wound up guiding the Lions to an 11-7 season and, although a tiebreaker with Saskatchewan and Winnipeg left B.C. in fourth place, it wasn't a bad debut for the one-time Montreal linebacker.

A big reason for that success was the acquisition of quarterback Dave Dickenson, who along with Buono led Calgary to the 2001 Grey Cup title. After a two-year, four-team sojourn through the NFL, Dickenson decided to return to the CFL.

But rather than rejoin Calgary, he opted to get back together with Buono.

Dickenson's impact was immediate, as he finished second to Montreal's Anthony Calvillo in passing yardage (5,496) and topped the QB-efficiency ratings at 112.7. He threw 36 TD passes, one less than Calvillo.

Many believe that had a bum knee not forced Dickenson to miss the semifinal against Toronto, the Lions may have gone on to the Grey Cup game.

Dickenson, who underwent successful surgery on his injured knee in the offseason, will be joined by several former Stampeder teammates in offensive tackle Bobby Singh, linebacker Otis Floyd, running back Antonio Warren and kicker Duncan O'Mahony.

One former Stampeder who won't be around for the reunion is running back Kelvin Anderson. Despite rushing for his eighth consecutive 1,000-yard season, the 32-year-old perennial All-Star was released in the offseason. He'll likely be replaced by the 28-year-old Warren, who spent 2002 with the New York Giants before being released prior to the 2003 NFL season.

The Lions' offense should once again be formidable. Heading the list of targets for Dickenson's throws is Geroy Simon, who hauled in 94 passes for 1,687 yards and 13 TDs last season. Also returning will be Carl Brazzell (68 catches, 1,111 yards), Frank Cutolo (64, 908) and Jason Clermont (41, 615).

Floyd will bolster a defense that already includes CFL All-Stars Barrin Simpson and Ray Jacobs. Also added to the defense was free-agent linebacker Martavius Houston, who was released by Toronto last summer after returning from NFL stints with Washington and Baltimore. Gone from the Lions' secondary is three-time All-Star cornerback Eric Carter.

3 SASKATCHEWAN ROUGHRIDERS

It was a struggle, but the Roughriders and their legion of ardent supporters appear to have finally gotten over the fact that the 'Riders failed to gain a berth in last November's Grey Cup played in their own back yard, quaint Taylor Field. Oh, what a bash that would have been on the flatlands.

Now their mission will be to make up for it by being the Western representative in this year's title game in Ottawa. And if they can continue the steady improvement they've made since Danny Barrett took over the coaching reins in 2000, a Grey Cup appearance might not be out of the question.

Taking over a club that had finished 3-15 in 1999, Barrett has turned things around in a big way, as the 'Riders finished 11-7 last year. That accomplishment not only made Barrett a Coach-of-the-Year finalist but the subject of persistent reports that he was headed to Calgary as general manager and head coach.

Barrett remains a Roughrider, and so do the four quarterbacks who were on his roster last fall. Selecting one as the starter will be his main task going into this year's training camp.

Former Clemson University star Nealon Greene appears to have Barrett's confidence as the team's No. 1 pivot despite an inconsistent 2003 season. But if he falters, or the 'Riders get a trade offer they can't refuse, he could be on the way to his third CFL team.

There are many Roughrider watchers who believe Barrett should be going with Kevin Glenn, who has patiently waited in a backup role the past three seasons. Then there's veteran Henry Burris, who returned to Saskatchewan after spending two seasons and last year's training camp with the Green Bay Packers. He wasn't the Burris who left Regina after throwing for more than 4,500 yards in 2001. But a full training camp this year may rejuvenate the 29-year-old Temple University product.

Finally, there's 25-year-old Ian Butler from Hofstra. Though highly regarded, he saw almost no playing time last season.

Regardless of who winds up as the starting QB, he won't be passing to sure-handed Matt Dominguez or handing off to shifty tailback Kenton Keith. Both were snatched up by the New York Jets. Saskatchewan also lost offensive lineman Tango McCauley to Dallas and middle linebacker Terrance Melton to Atlanta.

NEALON GREENE
SASKATCHEWAN ROUGHRIDERS

Defensively, the team was able to re-sign All-Star tackle Nate Davis as well as cornerback LaDouphyous McCalla and end Andre Brown. McCalla led a secondary that allowed the fewest passing touchdowns in the CFL last season.

KHARI JONES
WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS

4 WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS

It was cloaked in niceties, but when the Blue Bombers took away the role of vice president of football operations from Dave Ritchie and left him as only the team's head coach, the message was clear: Ritchie's future with the club will depend on the team's performance this season.

There's no doubt the team's 11-7 record last season was acceptable. However, a quick exit in the first round of the playoffs was not exactly what the directors of the publicly owned team and president and CEO Lyle Bauer had envisioned going into last season.

After a 12-6 mark a year earlier that featured a near-miss Grey Cup appearance, many expected the Bombers to make up for it last year. Inconsistency was the bane of the Bombers' 2003 campaign. They looked unbeatable in opening the season with four consecutive wins and later put together a five-game unbeaten string. But they also went through a pair of three-game losing streaks.

The inconsistent play was most noticeable in a passing game that was supposed to be the team's strong suit.

Quarterback Khari Jones' completion percentage fell dramatically to 54.7 percent, the third worst among starting CFL pivots. In 2001, when he was named the league's outstanding player, he was good on 60.3 percent of his throws. He was even better in 2002 when receivers caught 61.6 percent of his tosses and his prime receiver, Milt Stegall, succeeded him as the league's best player.

With the departure of Arland Bruce III to the NFL, Stegall usually attracted double coverage and his production fell to 68 catches, his fewest in five years. He still managed to top 1,000 yards receiving, however.

The Bombers need to come up with another receiving threat to take the pressure off Stegall, and were making a pitch for Edmonton free agent Jason Tucker at press time. Keith Stokes, obtained in a trade with Montreal, could also be that man.

Charles Roberts led the league in rushing with 1,554 yards on 264 carries, but he'll have to try to equal that impressive output this year without fullback Mike Sellers, who returned to the Washington Redskins. The 6-foot-3, 270-pound behemoth was a devastating blocker and kept defenses from keying on Roberts with his own running ability (427 yards, 7 TDs). Randy Bowles, obtained in a trade with Toronto, will replace Sellers.

On the offensive line, the Bombers re-signed Moe Elewonibi, Dan Gyetvai and Dave Mudge, and got Cory Annett from the Argonauts, but they still need help up front. Defensively, B.C. may have given up on veteran cornerback Eric Carter, but the Bombers offered him a spot in their secondary, where Harold Nash and Dave Donaldson are gone.

5 CALGARY STAMPEDERS

There's no question about Matt Dunigan's place in CFL annals. He is one of the league's all-time quarterbacking greats, and still ranks third behind only Damon Allen and Ron Lancaster in career passing attempts, completions, total yardage and touchdowns. But whether his unquestioned ability as a leader in the huddle will make him a success as an untested general manager and head coach with the Stampeders remains to be seen.

The Stampeders, who have been in turmoil for the past two seasons under the ownership of Californian Michael Feterik, have given the dual roles to Dunigan, who was inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame last fall.

Since retiring after the 1996 season, Dunigan's only coaching experience has been as an assistant at NCAA Division II power Valdosta (Ga.) State University. Since 1999, he's been a TV analyst on CFL broadcasts.

Dunigan was hired by newly appointed president Ron Rooke, the team's one-time media coordinator, to replace Jim Barker, who was fired as head coach two days before Christmas. He replaced Fred Fateri as general manager.

Noting what he described as a surprising amount of "poor attitudes and professionalism" on the team, Dunigan hasn't held back in making changes. He didn't try to prevent a number of veterans from signing elsewhere as free agents, including linebacker Otis Floyd, offensive guard Bobby Singh, defensive tackle Demetrious Maxie and kicker/punter Duncan O'Mahony.

Dunigan made two significant trades in the offseason, sending cornerback Davis Sanchez to Montreal for Omar Evans and getting linebacker John Grace, quarterback Romaro Miller (Ole Miss), offensive lineman Seth Dittman and defensive lineman Fred Perry from Ottawa for defensive end Kai Ellis, defensive back Anthony Malbrough and the rights to two prospects. He scored a major coup in landing free-agent linebacker Brian Clark from Winnipeg and added young Canadian linebacker Scott Coe.

The quarterback position has been the weak spot for the Stamps the past couple of seasons. But Miller and veteran Marcus Crandell (East Carolina), who hasn't lived up to the Player-of-the-Game honors he gained in taking Calgary to the 2001 Grey Cup title, should benefit greatly from Dunigan's tutelage.

Kevin Feterik, the southpaw quarterback from BYU who was placed in the awkward position of trying to step into the signal-calling duties for his father's team, was released at his own request.

And speaking of the elder Feterik, the Stampeders could have new owners before the season begins. A group of Calgary oilmen fronted by former Stampeder slotback Dave Sapunjis were negotiating with Feterik to purchase the team at press time.

2004 Grey Cup

Frank Clair Stadium
Ottawa
Sunday, Nov. 21

REUTERS/CORBIS

MARCUS CRANDELL
CALGARY STAMPEDERS

TONY MILES
TORONTO ARGONAUTS

BARRIN SIMPSON
B.C. LIONS

Street & Smith's *prediction:*

TORONTO ARGONAUTS OVER B.C. LIONS

AFC stats

TEAM SCORING

RECORDS

Points: 513, Houston (1961); Miami (1984)

TEAM	TD	TDR	TDP	TDM	XP	XPA	2PT	2PTA	FG	FGA	SAF	POINTS
Kansas City	63	32	24	7	58	59	0	3	16	20	0	484
Indianapolis	48	16	29	3	46	46	1	2	37	37	0	447
Tennessee	48	11	30	7	43	44	3	4	32	37	1	435
Baltimore	41	18	16	7	35	35	4	6	34	40	0	391
Denver	42	20	19	3	41	41	1	1	28	32	1	381
New England	39	9	23	7	37	38	0	0	25	34	1	348
Cincinnati	40	12	26	2	40	40	0	0	22	25	0	346
San Diego	38	16	21	1	36	36	2	2	15	20	0	313
Miami	35	14	17	4	33	34	0	1	22	29	1	311
Pittsburgh	33	10	19	4	31	32	1	1	23	32	0	300
N.Y. Jets	29	8	20	1	24	24	1	5	27	32	1	283
Jacksonville	31	13	17	1	30	30	0	1	20	33	0	276
Oakland	29	15	9	5	28	29	0	0	22	25	1	270
Houston	29	14	14	1	27	27	0	2	18	22	0	255
Cleveland	27	8	17	2	23	24	0	3	23	28	0	254
Buffalo	27	13	11	3	24	24	0	2	17	24	3	243
AFC AVERAGE	37.4	14.3	19.5	3.6	34.8	35.2	0.8	2.1	23.8	29.4	0.6	333.6

PASSING

RECORDS

Completions: 404, Warren Moon, Houston (1991)
Touchdowns: 48, Dan Marino, Miami (1984)
Yards: 5,084, Dan Marino, Miami (1984)
Longest TD: 99 yards, Jim Plunkett to Cliff Branch, L.A. Raiders (1983); Stan Humphries to Tony Martin, San Diego (1994)

167+ ATTEMPTS	TEAM	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	AVG	TD	TD%	LONG	INT	INT%	SACKS	LOSS	RATING
McNair, Steve	Ten	400	250	62.5	3215	8.04	24	6.0	73	7	1.8	19	108	100.4
Manning, Peyton	Ind	566	379	67.0	4267	7.54	29	5.1	79t	10	1.8	18	107	99.0
Green, Trent	KC	523	330	63.1	4039	7.72	24	4.6	67t	12	2.3	20	130	92.6
Plummer, Jake	Den	302	189	62.6	2182	7.23	15	5.0	60	7	2.3	14	73	91.2
Testaverde, Vinny	NYJ	198	123	62.1	1385	6.99	7	3.5	61	2	1.0	6	48	90.6
Kitna, Jon	Cin	520	324	62.3	3591	6.91	26	5.0	82t	15	2.9	37	249	87.4
Brady, Tom	NE	527	317	60.2	3620	6.87	23	4.4	82t	12	2.3	32	219	85.9
Pennington, Chad	NYJ	297	189	63.6	2139	7.20	13	4.4	65t	12	4.0	25	160	82.9
Flutie, Doug	SD	167	91	54.5	1097	6.57	9	5.4	73t	4	2.4	8	27	82.8
Couch, Tim	Cle	203	120	59.1	1319	6.50	7	3.4	71t	6	3.0	19	116	77.6
Maddox, Tommy	Pit	519	298	57.4	3414	6.58	18	3.5	53	17	3.3	41	242	75.3
Holcomb, Kelly	Cle	302	193	63.9	1797	5.95	10	3.3	68t	12	4.0	21	166	74.6
Gannon, Rich	Oak	225	125	55.6	1274	5.66	6	2.7	46t	4	1.8	17	90	73.5
Bledsoe, Drew	Buf	471	274	58.2	2860	6.07	11	2.3	54t	12	2.5	49	371	73.0
Leftwich, Byron	Jac	418	239	57.2	2819	6.74	14	3.3	84t	16	3.8	19	90	73.0
Fiedler, Jay	Mia	314	179	57.0	2138	6.81	11	3.5	59	13	4.1	19	126	72.4
Wright, Anthony	Bal	178	94	52.8	1199	6.74	9	5.1	64	8	4.5	19	125	72.3
Carr, David	Hou	295	167	56.6	2013	6.82	9	3.1	78t	13	4.4	15	90	69.5
Brees, Drew	SD	356	205	57.6	2108	5.92	11	3.1	68t	15	4.2	21	178	67.5
Mirer, Rick	Oak	221	116	52.5	1267	5.73	3	1.4	47t	5	2.3	22	122	64.8
Boller, Kyle	Bal	224	116	51.8	1260	5.63	7	3.1	73t	9	4.0	17	92	62.4

PUNTING

RECORDS

Number: 108, Rick Tuten, Seattle
Average: 46.9 yards, Greg Montgomery, Houston (1992)
Longest: 98 yards, Steve O'Neal, N.Y. Jets (1969)
(Ranked By Net Average)

49+ PUNTS	TEAM	NO	YARDS	LONG	AVG	TB	BLK	OPP RET	RET YDS	IN 20	NET AVG
Hentrich, Craig	Ten	71	3117	58	43.9	8	0	30	276	26	37.8
Lechler, Shane	Oak	96	4503	73	46.9	13	0	52	669	27	37.2
Moorman, Brian	Buf	85	3788	71	44.6	3	0	52	577	20	37.1
Stanley, Chad	Hou	97	4028	58	41.5	3	0	43	407	36	36.7
Bennett, Darren	SD	82	3436	56	41.9	3	0	38	409	28	36.2
Miller, Josh	Pit	84	3521	72	41.9	8	1	47	299	27	36.0
Smith, Hunter	Ind	62	2617	55	42.2	3	1	32	319	20	35.5
Zastudil, Dave	Bal	89	3649	67	41.0	8	0	41	354	21	35.2
Royals, Mark	Mia-Jac	61	2495	51	40.9	6	0	33	227	14	35.2
Gardocki, Chris	Cle	72	3019	60	41.9	10	0	33	316	18	34.8
Turk, Matt	Mia	68	2631	57	38.7	7	0	20	143	23	34.5
Richardson, Kyle	Cin	49	1961	58	40.0	5	0	28	220	9	33.5
Baker, Jason	KC	80	3156	68	39.5	7	1	38	327	21	33.2
Knorr, Micah	Den	68	2937	62	43.2	6	2	46	560	14	32.2

SCORING

RECORDS

Points: 157, Mike Vanderjagt, Indianapolis (2003)
Field Goals: 39, Olindo Mare, Miami (1999)
Extra Points: 70, Uwe von Schamann, Miami (1984)

KICKERS	TEAM	XP	XPA	FG	FGA	PTS
Vanderjagt, Mike	Ind	46	46	37	37	157
Stover, Matt	Bal	35	35	33	38	134
Anderson, Gary	Ten	42	42	27	31	123
Elam, Jason	Den	39	39	27	31	120
Vinatieri, Adam	NE	37	38	25	34	112
Andersen, Morten	KC	58	59	16	20	106
Graham, Shayne	Cin	40	40	22	25	106
Brien, Doug	NYJ	24	24	27	32	105
Reed, Jeff	Pit	31	32	23	32	100
Mare, Olindo	Mia	33	34	22	29	99
Janikowski, Sebastian	Oak	28	29	22	25	94
Marler, Seth	Jac	30	30	20	33	90
Brown, Kris	Hou	27	27	18	22	81
Christie, Steve	SD	36	36	15	20	81
Lindell, Rian	Buf	24	24	17	24	75
Dawson, Phil	Cle	20	21	18	21	74
Conway, Brett	NYG-Cle	9	9	14	19	51
Hentrich, Craig	Ten	1	1	4	5	13
Knorr, Micah	Den	2	2	1	1	5
Nedney, Joe	Ten	0	1	1	1	3
Richey, Wade	Bal	0	0	1	2	3

RECORDS

Touchdowns: 27, Priest Holmes, Kansas City (2003)

NON-KICKERS	TEAM	TD	TDR	TDP	TDM	2PT	PTS
Holmes, Priest	KC	27	27	0	0	0	162
Tomlinson, LaDainian	SD	17	13	4	0	0	102
Portis, Clinton	Den	14	14	0	0	1	86
Lewis, Jamal	Bal	14	14	0	0	0	84
Chambers, Chris	Mia	11	0	11	0	0	66
Henry, Travis	Buf	11	10	1	0	0	66
James, Edgerrin	Ind	11	11	0	0	0	66
Gonzalez, Tony	KC	10	0	10	0	0	60
Harrison, Marvin	Ind	10	0	10	0	0	60
Johnson, Chad	Cin	10	0	10	0	0	60
Moss, Santana	NYJ	10	0	10	0	0	60
Ward, Hines	Pit	10	0	10	0	0	60
Williams, Ricky	Mia	10	9	1	0	0	60
Johnson, Rudi	Cin	9	9	0	0	0	54
Davis, Domanick	Hou	8	8	0	0	0	48
Mason, Derrick	Ten	8	0	8	0	0	48
McCareins, Justin	Ten	8	0	7	1	0	48
Sharpe, Shannon	Den	8	0	8	0	0	48
Warrick, Peter	Cin	8	0	7	1	0	48
Bettis, Jerome	Pit	7	7	0	0	1	44
Boston, David	SD	7	0	7	0	1	44
Crockett, Zack	Oak	7	7	0	0	0	42
Taylor, Fred	Jac	7	6	1	0	0	42
Wayne, Reggie	Ind	7	0	7	0	0	42
Givens, David	NE	6	0	6	0	0	36
Robinson, Marcus	Bal	6	0	6	0	0	36
Anderson, Mike	Den	5	3	2	0	0	30
Cloud, Mike	NE	5	5	0	0	0	30
Davis, Andre	Cle	5	0	5	0	0	30
George, Eddie	Ten	5	5	0	0	0	30
Hall, Dante	KC	5	0	1	4	0	30
Kennison, Eddie	KC	5	0	5	0	0	30
Becht, Anthony	NYJ	4	0	4	0	1	26
Calico, Tyrone	Ten	4	0	4	0	1	26
Heap, Todd	Bal	3	0	3	0	4	26
McNair, Steve	Ten	4	4	0	0	1	26
Bennett, Drew	Ten	4	0	4	0	0	24
Bradford, Corey	Hou	4	0	4	0	0	24
Brown, Troy	NE	4	0	4	0	0	24
Buchanon, Phillip	Oak	4	0	0	4	0	24

NFC stats

TEAM SCORING

RECORDS

Points: 556, Minnesota (1998)

TEAM	TD	TDR	TDP	TDM	XP	XPA	2PT	2PTA	FG	FGA	SAF	POINTS
St. Louis	47	19	23	5	46	46	0	1	39	42	1	447
Green Bay	53	18	32	3	51	51	2	2	23	26	0	442
Minnesota	51	15	32	4	48	48	2	3	18	25	2	416
Seattle	48	17	27	4	48	48	0	0	22	30	1	404
San Francisco	44	16	25	3	38	41	1	3	26	37	1	384
Philadelphia	43	23	17	3	42	42	0	1	24	29	1	374
New Orleans	39	11	25	3	36	37	1	2	22	30	1	340
Carolina	33	9	19	5	29	30	0	3	32	38	1	325
Tampa Bay	36	5	27	4	33	34	1	2	16	26	1	301
Atlanta	35	17	14	4	32	33	0	1	19	27	0	299
Dallas	31	11	17	3	30	31	0	0	23	29	2	289
Washington	30	8	21	1	26	27	2	3	25	33	1	287
Chicago	29	13	12	4	27	27	2	2	26	36	0	283
Detroit	29	5	17	7	26	27	2	2	22	23	0	270
N.Y. Giants	26	6	16	4	23	23	2	3	20	27	0	243
Arizona	25	5	18	2	19	20	1	5	18	26	0	225
NFC AVERAGE	37.4	12.4	21.4	3.7	34.6	35.3	1.0	2.1	23.4	30.3	0.8	333.1

PASSING

RECORDS

Completions: 377, Warren Moon, Minnesota (1995)
Touchdowns: 41, Kurt Warner, St. Louis (1999)
Yards: 4,614, Neil Lomax, St. Louis (1984)
Longest TD: 99 yards, Frank Filchock to Andy Farkas, Washington (1939); George Izzo to Bobby Mitchell, Washington (1963); Karl Weetan to Pat Studstill, Detroit (1966); Sonny Jurgensen to Jerry Allen, Washington (1968); Ron Jaworski to Mike Quick, Philadelphia (1985); Brett Favre to Robert Brooks, Green Bay (1995)

177+ ATTEMPTS	TEAM	ATT	COMP	PCT	YDS	AVG	TD	TD%	LONG	INT	INT%	SACKS	LOSS	RATING
Culpepper, Daunte	Min	454	295	65.0	3479	7.66	25	5.5	59t	11	2.4	37	196	96.4
Favre, Brett	GB	471	308	65.4	3361	7.14	32	6.8	66t	21	4.5	19	137	90.4
Brooks, Aaron	NO	518	306	59.1	3546	6.85	24	4.6	76t	8	1.5	34	195	88.8
Hasselbeck, Matt	Sea	513	313	61.0	3841	7.49	26	5.1	80t	15	2.9	42	246	88.8
Johnson, Brad	TB	570	354	62.1	3811	6.69	26	4.6	76t	21	3.7	20	111	81.5
Bulger, Marc	StL	532	336	63.2	3845	7.23	22	4.1	48	22	4.1	37	288	81.4
Delhomme, Jake	Car	449	266	59.2	3219	7.17	19	4.2	67t	16	3.6	23	168	80.6
Garcia, Jeff	SF	392	225	57.4	2704	6.90	18	4.6	75t	13	3.3	21	104	80.1
McNabb, Donovan	Phi	478	275	57.5	3216	6.73	16	3.3	59	11	2.3	43	253	79.6
Ramsey, Patrick	Was	337	179	53.1	2166	6.43	14	4.2	64	9	2.7	30	206	75.8
Carter, Quincy	Dal	505	292	57.8	3302	6.54	17	3.4	64	21	4.2	37	185	71.4
Collins, Kerry	NYG	500	284	56.8	3110	6.22	13	2.6	77t	16	3.2	28	164	70.7
Blake, Jeff	Ari	367	208	56.7	2247	6.12	13	3.5	71t	15	4.1	19	132	69.6
Johnson, Doug	Atl	243	136	56.0	1655	6.81	8	3.3	86t	12	4.9	19	121	67.5
Harrington, Joey	Det	554	309	55.8	2880	5.20	17	3.1	72t	22	4.0	9	55	63.9
Hasselbeck, Tim	Was	177	95	53.7	1012	5.72	5	2.8	40	7	4.0	9	44	63.6
Chandler, Chris	Chi	192	107	55.7	1050	5.47	3	1.6	37	7	3.6	14	101	61.3
Stewart, Kordell	Chi	251	126	50.2	1418	5.65	7	2.8	61t	12	4.8	25	146	56.8

PUNTING

RECORDS

Number: 114, Bob Parsons, Chicago (1981)
Average: 51.4 yards, Sammy Baugh, Washington (1940)
Longest: 94 yards, Joe Lintzenich, Chicago (1931)
(Ranked By Net Average)

56+ PUNTS	TEAM	NO	YARDS	LONG	AVG	TB	BLK	OPP RET	RET YDS	IN 20	NET AVG
Berger, Mitch	NO	71	3144	59	44.3	5	1	36	294	28	38.2
Rouen, Tom	Sea	67	2762	61	41.2	3	2	29	140	29	37.1
Mohr, Chris	Atl	87	3473	54	39.9	2	0	35	301	19	36.0
Tupa, Tom	TN	83	3590	60	43.3	6	0	39	489	26	35.9
Sauerbrun, Todd	Car	77	3433	64	44.6	9	3	35	402	22	35.6
Bidwell, Josh	GB	69	2875	60	41.7	7	0	32	316	16	35.1
Gowin, Toby	Dal	94	3665	59	39.0	8	0	34	227	25	34.9
Maynard, Brad	Chi	79	3258	53	41.2	9	2	36	277	23	34.6
Johnson, Dirk	Phi	79	3207	60	40.6	10	0	35	272	27	34.6
Player, Scott	Ari	82	3511	64	42.8	9	1	41	472	19	34.4
Barker, Bryan	Was	84	3377	69	40.2	5	0	40	393	24	34.3
Feagles, Jeff	NYG	90	3641	59	40.5	6	1	40	432	31	33.9
Landeta, Sean	StL	59	2525	57	42.8	5	0	32	484	14	32.9
Johnson, Eddie	Min	56	2191	55	39.1	5	1	25	233	12	32.6
Harris, Nick	Cin-Det	91	3615	53	39.7	8	1	63	498	16	32.1

SCORING

RECORDS

Points: 176, Paul Hornung, Green Bay (1960)
Field Goals: 39, Jeff Wilkins, St. Louis (2003)
Extra Points: 64, Jeff Wilkins, St. Louis (1999)

KICKERS	TEAM	XP	XPA	FG	FGA	PTS
Wilkins, Jeff	StL	46	46	39	42	163
Kasay, John	Car	29	30	32	38	125
Longwell, Ryan	GB	51	51	23	26	120
Akers, David	Phi	42	42	24	29	114
Brown, Josh	Sea	48	48	22	30	114
Edinger, Paul	Chi	27	27	26	36	105
Carney, John	NO	36	37	22	30	102
Elling, Aaron	Min	48	48	18	25	102
Hall, John	Was	26	27	25	33	101
Cundiff, Billy	Dal	30	31	23	29	99
Hanson, Jason	Det	26	27	22	23	92
Feely, Jay	Atl	32	33	19	27	89
Gramatica, Martín	TB	33	34	16	26	81
Peterson, Todd	SF	22	23	12	15	58
Bryant, Matt	NYG	17	17	11	14	50
Rackers, Neil	Ari	8	8	9	12	35
Pochman, Owen	SF	9	10	8	15	33
Chandler, Jeff	SF	7	8	6	7	25
Duncan, Tim	Ari	5	6	6	10	23
Gramatica, Bill	Ari	6	6	3	4	15
Feagles, Jeff	NYG	0	0	0	1	0

RECORDS

Touchdowns: 26, Marshall Faulk, St. Louis (2000)

NON-KICKERS	TEAM	TD	TDR	TDP	TDM	2PT	PTS
Green, Ahman	GB	20	15	5	0	0	120
Moss, Randy	Min	17	0	17	0	0	102
Alexander, Shaun	Sea	16	14	2	0	0	96
Westbrook, Brian	Phi	13	7	4	2	0	78
Holt, Torry	StL	12	0	12	0	0	72
Duckett, T.J.	Atl	11	11	0	0	0	66
Faulk, Marshall	StL	11	10	1	0	0	66
Horn, Joe	NO	10	0	10	0	0	60
Buckhalter, Correll	Phi	9	8	1	0	0	54
Jackson, Darrell	Sea	9	0	9	0	0	54
McCardell, Keenan	TB	9	0	8	1	0	54
Owens, Terrell	SF	9	0	9	0	0	54
Walker, Javon	GB	9	0	9	0	0	54
Boldin, Anquan	Ari	8	0	8	0	0	48
Davis, Stephen	Car	8	8	0	0	0	48
McAllister, Deuce	NO	8	8	0	0	0	48
Smith, Steve	Car	8	0	7	1	0	48
Williams, Moe	Min	8	5	3	0	0	48
Barlow, Kevan	SF	7	6	1	0	0	42
Engram, Bobby	Sea	7	0	6	1	0	42
Garcia, Jeff	SF	7	7	0	0	0	42
Staley, Duce	Phi	7	5	2	0	0	42
Streets, Tai	SF	7	0	7	0	0	42
McCants, Darnerien	Was	6	0	6	0	2	40
Coles, Laveranues	Was	6	0	6	0	0	36
Hilliard, Ike	NYG	6	0	6	0	0	36
Thomas, Anthony	Chi	6	6	0	0	0	36
Smith, Onterrio	Min	5	5	0	0	1	32
Anderson, Richie	Dal	5	1	4	0	0	30
Bruce, Isaac	StL	5	0	5	0	0	30
Dunn, Warrick	Atl	5	3	2	0	0	30
Gardner, Rod	Was	5	0	5	0	0	30
Glenn, Terry	Dal	5	0	5	0	0	30
Hambrick, Troy	Dal	5	5	0	0	0	30
Robinson, Koren	Sea	5	0	4	1	0	30
Toomer, Amani	NYG	5	0	5	0	0	30
Williams, Boo	NO	5	0	5	0	0	30
Franks, Bubba	GB	4	0	4	0	2	28
Hakim, Az-Zahir	Det	4	0	4	0	1	26
Booker, Marty	Chi	4	0	4	0	0	24

AFC stats

NON-KICKERS	TEAM	TD	TDR	TDP	TDM	2PT	PTS
Burress, Plaxico	Pit	4	0	4	0	0	24
Garner, Charlie	Oak	4	3	1	0	0	24
Graham, Daniel	NE	4	0	4	0	0	24
Johnson, Andre	Hou	4	0	4	0	0	24
Jordan, LaMont	NYJ	4	4	0	0	0	24
Kinney, Erron	Ten	4	0	3	1	0	24
Mack, Stacey	Hou	4	4	0	0	0	24
Morton, Johnnie	KC	4	0	4	0	0	24
Shaw, Bobby	Buf	4	0	4	0	0	24
Smith, Jimmy	Jac	4	0	4	0	0	24
Smith, Rod	Den	4	0	3	1	0	24
Washington, Kelley	Cin	4	0	4	0	0	24
Wheatley, Tyrone	Oak	4	4	0	0	0	24
Blaylock, Derrick	KC	3	2	1	0	0	18
Branch, Deion	NE	3	0	3	0	0	18
Dunn, Jason	KC	3	0	3	0	0	18
Edwards, Troy	Jac	3	0	3	0	0	18
Fiedler, Jay	Mia	3	3	0	0	0	18
Jackson, James	Cle	3	3	0	0	0	18
Johnson, Bethel	NE	3	0	2	1	0	18
Johnson, Kevin	Cle-Jac	3	0	3	0	0	18
Jones, Terry	Bal	3	0	3	0	0	18
McKnight, James	Mia	3	1	2	0	0	18
McMichael, Randy	Mia	3	0	2	1	0	18
Miller, Billy	Hou	3	0	3	0	0	18
Morgan, Quincy	Cle	3	0	3	0	0	18
Parker, Eric, S.D.	SD	3	0	3	0	0	18
Plummer, Jake	Den	3	3	0	0	0	18
Pollard, Marcus	Ind	3	0	3	0	0	18
Randle El, Antwaan	Pit	3	0	1	2	0	18
Reed, Ed, Bal.	Bal	3	0	0	3	0	18
Smith, Antowain	NE	3	3	0	0	0	18
Stokley, Brandon	Ind	3	0	3	0	0	18
Taylor, Travis	Bal	3	0	3	0	0	18
Toefield, LaBrandon	Jac	3	2	1	0	0	18
Walters, Troy, Ind.	Ind	3	0	3	0	0	18
Williams, Ricky	Ind	3	2	1	0	0	18
Holcombe, Robert	Ten	2	1	1	0	1	14
Mungro, James	Ind	2	2	0	0	1	14
Bledsoe, Drew	Buf	2	2	0	0	0	12
Brown, Tim	Oak	2	0	2	0	0	12
Bruschi, Tedy	NE	2	0	0	2	0	12
Carr, David	Hou	2	2	0	0	0	12
Carter, Jonathan	NYJ	2	0	1	1	0	12
Conway, Curtis	NYJ	2	0	2	0	0	12
Dillon, Corey, Cin.	Cin	2	2	0	0	0	12
Droughns, Reuben	Den	2	0	2	0	0	12
Dyson, Andre	Ten	2	0	0	2	0	12
Fauria, Christian	NE	2	0	2	0	0	12
Flutie, Doug	SD	2	2	0	0	0	12
Gaffney, Jabar	Hou	2	0	2	0	0	12
Gates, Antonio	SD	2	0	2	0	0	12
Green, Trent	KC	2	2	0	0	0	12
Hatchette, Matt	Jac	2	0	2	0	0	12
Heinrich, Keith	Cle	2	0	2	0	0	12
Johnson, Jeremi	Cin	2	1	1	0	0	12
Leftwich, Byron	Jac	2	2	0	0	0	12
Lelie, Ashley	Den	2	0	2	0	0	12
Martin, Curtis	NYJ	2	2	0	0	0	12
Moore, Dave	Buf	2	0	2	0	0	12
Northcutt, Dennis	Cle	2	0	2	0	0	12
Osgood, Kassim	SD	2	0	2	0	0	12
Pennington, Chad	NYJ	2	2	0	0	0	12
Reed, Josh	Buf	2	0	2	0	0	12
Rice, Jerry	Oak	2	0	2	0	0	12
Schobel, Matt	Cin	2	0	2	0	0	12
Smith, Musa	Bal	2	2	0	0	0	12
Suggs, Lee	Cle	2	2	0	0	0	12
Taylor, Chester	Bal	2	2	0	0	0	12
White, Jamel	Cle	2	1	1	0	0	12
Woods, Jerome	KC	2	0	0	2	0	12
Wrighster, George	Jac	2	0	2	0	0	12
Wycheck, Frank	Ten	2	0	2	0	0	12
Zereoue, Amos	Pit	2	2	0	0	0	12
Boiman, Rocky	Ten	1	0	0	1	0	8
Taylor, Jason	Mia	1	0	0	1	0	8
Adams, Sam	Buf	1	0	0	1	0	6
Allen, David	Jac	1	0	1	0	0	6
Armstrong, Derick	Hou	1	0	1	0	0	6
Ayodele, Akin	Jac	1	0	0	1	0	6
Bennett, Brandon	Cin	1	0	1	0	0	6
Berlin, Eddie	Ten	1	0	1	0	0	6
Bowers, R.J.	Cle	1	0	1	0	0	6
Brackett, Gary	Ind	1	0	0	1	0	6
Brady, Kyle	Jac	1	0	1	0	0	6
Brady, Tom	NE	1	1	0	0	0	6
Brees, Drew	SD	1	0	1	0	0	6
Bruener, Mark	Pit	1	0	1	0	0	6
Brunell, Mark	Jac	1	1	0	0	0	6
Buckley, Terrell	Mia	1	0	0	1	0	6
Bulluck, Keith	Ten	1	0	0	1	0	6
Campbell, Mark	Buf	1	0	1	0	0	6
Carlisle, Cooper	Den	1	0	1	0	0	6
Carswell, Dwayne	Den	1	0	1	0	0	6
Centers, Larry	NE	1	0	1	0	0	6
Chatham, Matt	NE	1	0	0	1	0	6
Chrebet, Wayne	NYJ	1	0	1	0	0	6
Clark, Dallas	Ind	1	0	1	0	0	6
Clements, Nate, Buf.	Buf	1	0	0	1	0	6
Couch, Tim	Cle	1	1	0	0	0	6
Doering, Chris	Pit	1	0	1	0	0	6
Edwards, Marc	Jac	1	1	0	0	0	6
Freeney, Dwight	Ind	1	0	0	1	0	6
Fuamatu-Ma'afala, Chris	Jac	1	1	0	0	0	6
Gabriel, Doug	Oak	1	0	0	1	0	6
Gold, Ian	Den	1	0	0	1	0	6
Green, William	Cle	1	1	0	0	0	6
Hardy, Kevin	Cin	1	0	0	1	0	6
Harper, Nick	Ind	1	0	0	1	0	6
Harts, Shaunard	KC	1	0	0	1	0	6
Hope, Chris	Pit	1	0	1	0	0	6
Johnson, Larry	KC	1	1	0	0	0	6
Johnson, Teyo	Oak	1	0	1	0	0	6
Jolley, Doug	Oak	1	0	1	0	0	6
Kelly, Reggie	Cin	1	0	1	0	0	6
King, Andre	Cle	1	0	0	1	0	6
Kreider, Dan	Pit	1	1	0	0	0	6
Lassiter, Kwamie	SD	1	0	0	1	0	6
Law, Ty	NE	1	0	0	1	0	6
Lee, Donald	Mia	1	0	1	0	0	6
Lewis, Jermaine	Jac	1	0	1	0	0	6
Lewis, Ray	Bal	1	0	0	1	0	6
Madison, Sam	Mia	1	0	0	1	0	6
McAlister, Chris	Bal	1	0	0	1	0	6
McCree, Marlon	Hou	1	0	0	1	0	6
McCutcheon, Daylon	Cle	1	0	0	1	0	6
McGinest, Willie	NE	1	0	0	1	0	6
Minor, Travis	Mia	1	1	0	0	0	6
Mirer, Rick	Oak	1	1	0	0	0	6
Morris, Sammy	Buf	1	1	0	0	0	6
Moulds, Eric	Buf	1	0	1	0	0	6
Neal, Lorenzo	SD	1	1	0	0	0	6
Norman, Josh	SD	1	0	1	0	0	6
Ogden, Jonathan	Bal	1	0	1	0	0	6
O'Neal, Deltha	Den	1	0	0	1	0	6
Peelle, Justin	SD	1	0	1	0	0	6
Porter, Jerry	Oak	1	0	1	0	0	6
Rhodes, Dominic	Ind	1	0	1	0	0	6
Ricard, Alan	Bal	1	0	0	1	0	6
Riemersma, Jay	Pit	1	0	1	0	0	6
Rolle, Samari	Ten	1	0	0	1	0	6
Samuel, Asante	NE	1	0	0	1	0	6
Sanders, Darnell	Cle	1	0	1	0	0	6
Scott, Chad	Pit	1	0	0	1	0	6
Smith, Hunter	Ind	1	1	0	0	0	6
Sowell, Jerald	NYJ	1	0	1	0	0	6
Swayne, Kevin	NYJ	1	0	1	0	0	6
Townsend, Deshea	Pit	1	0	0	1	0	6
Volek, Billy	Ten	1	1	0	0	0	6
Ward, Dedric	NE	1	0	1	0	0	6
Whitted, Alvis	Oak	1	0	1	0	0	6
Williams, Chad	Bal	1	0	0	1	0	6
Williams, Pat	Buf	1	0	0	1	0	6

RECORDS — RUSHING

Carries: 403, Eddie George, Tennessee (2000)
Yards: 2,066, Jamal Lewis, Baltimore (2003)
Touchdowns: 27, Priest Holmes, Kansas City (2003)

70+ YARDS	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Lewis, Jamal	Bal	387	2066	5.3	82t	14
Tomlinson, LaDainian	SD	313	1645	5.3	73t	13

77+ YARDS	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Portis, Clinton	Den	290	1591	5.5	65t	14
Taylor, Fred	Jac	345	1572	4.6	62	6
Holmes, Priest	KC	320	1420	4.4	31t	27
Williams, Ricky	Mia	392	1372	3.5	45	9
Henry, Travis	Buf	331	1356	4.1	64	10
Martin, Curtis	NYJ	323	1308	4.0	56	2
James, Edgerrin	Ind	310	1259	4.1	43	11
Davis, Domanick	Hou	238	1031	4.3	51	8
George, Eddie	Ten	312	1031	3.3	27	5
Johnson, Rudi	Cin	215	957	4.5	54	9
Bettis, Jerome	Pit	246	811	3.3	21	7
Wheatley, Tyrone	Oak	159	678	4.3	41	4
Smith, Antowain	NE	182	642	3.5	30	3
Faulk, Kevin	NE	178	638	3.6	23	0
Green, William	Cle	142	559	3.9	26	1
Garner, Charlie	Oak	120	553	4.6	33	3
Dillon, Corey	Cin	138	541	3.9	39	2
Zereoue, Amos	Pit	132	433	3.3	22	2
Jackson, James	Cle	102	382	3.7	18	3
Griffin, Quentin	Den	94	345	3.7	23	0
Suggs, Lee	Cle	56	289	5.2	78t	2
Taylor, Chester	Bal	63	276	4.4	32	2
White, Jamel	Cle	70	266	3.8	23	1
Anderson, Mike	Den	70	257	3.7	44	3
Mack, Stacey	Hou	93	253	2.7	13	4
Brown, Chris	Ten	56	221	3.9	28	0
Toefield, LaBrandon	Jac	53	212	4.0	30	2
Plummer, Jake	Den	37	205	5.5	40	3
Fargas, Justin	Oak	40	203	5.1	53	0
Holcombe, Robert	Ten	63	201	3.2	21	1
Minor, Travis	Mia	41	193	4.7	26	1
Jordan, LaMont	NYJ	46	190	4.1	39	4
Bennett, Brandon	Cin	56	173	3.1	19	0
Flutie, Doug	SD	33	168	5.1	17	2
Rhodes, Dominic	Ind	37	157	4.2	25	0
Warrick, Peter	Cin	18	157	8.7	50	0
Williams, Ricky	Ind	48	155	3.2	19	2
Carr, David	Hou	27	151	5.6	36	2
Crockett, Zack	Oak	48	145	3.0	44	7
Fuamatu-Ma'afala, Chris	Jac	35	144	4.1	18	1
McNair, Steve	Ten	38	138	3.6	23	4
Cloud, Mike	NE	27	118	4.4	42	5
Burns, Joe	Buf	39	113	2.9	12	0
Kitna, Jon	Cin	38	113	3.0	15	0
Blaylock, Derrick	KC	22	112	5.1	25t	2
Leftwich, Byron	Jac	25	108	4.3	18	2
Hollings, Tony	Hou	38	102	2.7	17	0
Smith, Rod	Den	10	98	9.8	26	0
Morton, Johnnie	KC	8	94	11.8	39	0
Dwight, Tim	SD	9	88	9.8	20	0
Fiedler, Jay	Mia	34	88	2.6	14	3
Johnson, Larry	KC	20	85	4.3	15	1
Brees, Drew	SD	21	84	4.0	18	0
Green, Trent	KC	26	83	3.2	14	2
Mirer, Rick	Oak	20	83	4.2	20	1
Northcutt, Dennis	Cle	12	83	6.9	23	0
Centers, Larry	NE	21	82	3.9	13	0
Ricard, Alan	Bal	19	79	4.2	30	0
McKnight, James	Mia	2	75	37.5	68t	1
Randle El, Antwaan	Pit	15	75	5.0	32	0
Hall, Dante	KC	16	73	4.6	16	0
Wright, Anthony	Bal	28	73	2.6	17	0
Morris, Sammy	Buf	19	70	3.7	12	1

RECORDS — RECEIVING

Receptions: 143, Marvin Harrison, Indianapolis (2002)
Yards: 1,746, Charley Hennigan, Houston (1961)
Touchdowns: 18, Mark Clayton, Miami (1984)

17+ CATCHES	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Tomlinson, LaDainian	SD	100	725	7.3	73t	4
Mason, Derrick	Ten	95	1303	13.7	50t	8
Ward, Hines	Pit	95	1163	12.2	50	10
Harrison, Marvin	Ind	94	1272	13.5	79t	10
Johnson, Chad	Cin	90	1355	15.1	82t	10
Warrick, Peter	Cin	79	819	10.4	77t	7
Moss, Santana	NYJ	74	1105	14.9	65t	10
Smith, Rod	Den	74	845	11.4	38	3
Holmes, Priest	KC	74	690	9.3	36	0
Gonzalez, Tony	KC	71	916	12.9	67	10
Boston, David	SD	70	880	12.6	46t	7
Wayne, Reggie	Ind	68	838	12.3	57t	7

NON-KICKERS	TEAM	TD	TDR	TDP	TDM	2PT	PTS
Bulger, Marc	StL	4	4	0	0	0	24
Campbell, Kelly	Min	4	0	4	0	0	24
Cartwright, Rock	Was	4	4	0	0	0	24
Culpepper, Daunte	Min	4	4	0	0	0	24
Ferguson, Robert	GB	4	0	4	0	0	24
Harris, Arlen	StL	4	4	0	0	0	24
Hearst, Garrison	SF	4	3	1	0	0	24
Kleinsasser, Jimmy	Min	4	0	4	0	0	24
Mili, Itula	Sea	4	0	4	0	0	24
Pathon, Jerome	NO	4	0	4	0	0	24
Proehl, Ricky	Car	4	0	4	0	0	24
Barber, Tiki	NYG	3	2	1	0	1	20
Stewart, Kordell	Chi	3	3	0	0	1	20
Bryson, Shawn	Det	3	3	0	0	0	18
Crumpler, Alge	Atl	3	0	3	0	0	18
Fisher, Tony	GB	3	1	2	0	0	18
Henderson, William	GB	3	0	3	0	0	18
Johnson, Keyshawn	TB	3	0	3	0	0	18
Jones, Freddie	Ari	3	0	3	0	0	18
Jones, Thomas	TB	3	3	0	0	0	18
Levens, Dorsey	NYG	3	3	0	0	0	18
Looker, Dane	StL	3	0	3	0	0	18
McNabb, Donovan	Phi	3	3	0	0	0	18
Muhammad, Muhsin	Car	3	0	3	0	0	18
Price, Peerless	Atl	3	0	3	0	0	18
Ritchie, Jon	Phi	3	0	3	0	0	18
Rogers, Charles	Det	3	0	3	0	0	18
Stallworth, Donte'	NO	3	0	3	0	0	18
White, Dez	Chi	3	0	3	0	0	18
Wilson, Cedrick	SF	3	0	2	1	0	18
Anderson, Scotty	Det	2	0	2	0	1	14
Blake, Jeff	Ari	2	2	0	0	1	14
Lloyd, Brandon	SF	2	0	2	0	1	14
Alstott, Mike	TB	2	2	0	0	0	12
Azumah, Jerry	Chi	2	0	0	2	0	12
Betts, Ladell	Was	2	2	0	0	0	12
Bly, Dre'	Det	2	0	0	2	0	12
Brooks, Aaron	NO	2	2	0	0	0	12
Bryant, Antonio	Dal	2	0	2	0	0	12
Burleson, Nate	Min	2	0	2	0	0	12
Canidate, Trung	Was	2	1	1	0	0	12
Carter, Quincy	Dal	2	2	0	0	0	12
Cason, Aveion	Dal	2	2	0	0	0	12
Clark, Desmond	Chi	2	0	2	0	0	12
Conwell, Ernie	NO	2	0	2	0	0	12
Davenport, Najeh	GB	2	2	0	0	0	12
Driver, Donald	GB	2	0	2	0	0	12
Farris, Jimmy	Atl	2	0	2	0	0	12
Finneran, Brian	Atl	2	0	2	0	0	12
Fisher, Travis	StL	2	0	0	2	0	12
Fitzsimmons, Casey	Det	2	0	2	0	0	12
Forsey, Brock	Chi	2	2	0	0	0	12
Foster, DeShaun	Car	2	0	2	0	0	12
Gage, Justin	Chi	2	0	2	0	0	12
Galloway, Joey	Dal	2	0	2	0	0	12
Gary, Olandis	Det	2	2	0	0	0	12
Gilmore, Bryan	Ari	2	0	2	0	0	12
Griffith, Justin	Atl	2	0	2	0	0	12
Hasselbeck, Matt	Sea	2	2	0	0	0	12
Hodgins, James	Ari	2	0	2	0	0	12
Jurevicius, Joe	TB	2	0	2	0	0	12
Lee, Charles	TB	2	0	2	0	0	12
Manumaleuna, Brandon	StL	2	0	2	0	0	12
Martin, David	GB	2	0	2	0	0	12
Minter, Mike	Car	2	0	0	2	0	12
Mitchell, Freddie	Phi	2	0	2	0	0	12
Morton, Chad	Was	2	0	1	1	0	12
Pinkston, Todd	Phi	2	0	2	0	0	12
Pittman, Michael	TB	2	0	2	0	0	12
Pritchett, Stanley	Chi	2	2	0	0	0	12
Ricks, Mikhael	Det	2	0	2	0	0	12
Robinson, Jeff	Dal	2	0	2	0	0	12
Sapp, Warren	TB	2	0	2	0	0	12
Schlesinger, Cory	Det	2	0	2	0	0	12
Schroeder, Bill	Det	2	0	2	0	0	12
Shiancoe, Visanthe	NYG	2	0	2	0	0	12
Shockey, Jeremy	NYG	2	0	2	0	0	12
Smith, Emmitt	Ari	2	2	0	0	0	12
Swinton, Reggie	Det	2	0	0	2	0	12
Williams, Aeneas	StL	2	0	0	2	0	12
Yoder, Todd	TB	2	0	2	0	0	12
Huff, Orlando	Sea	1	0	0	1	0	8
Ambrose, Ashley	NO	1	0	0	1	0	6

NON-KICKERS	TEAM	TD	TDR	TDP	TDM	2PT	PTS
Archuleta, Adam	StL	1	0	0	1	0	6
Avery, John	Min	1	0	1	0	0	6
Bailey, Boss	Det	1	0	0	1	0	6
Bannister, Alex	Sea	1	0	1	0	0	6
Barber, Ronde	TB	1	0	0	1	0	6
Barlow, Reggie	TB	1	0	1	0	0	6
Bates, D'Wayne	Min	1	0	1	0	0	6
Beasley, Fred	SF	1	0	1	0	0	6
Bennett, Michael	Min	1	1	0	0	0	6
Bickerstaff, Erik	Dal	1	1	0	0	0	6
Bolden, Juran	Atl	1	0	0	1	0	6
Briggs, Lance	Chi	1	0	0	1	0	6
Brooks, Derrick	TB	1	0	0	1	0	6
Brown, Ralph	NYG	1	0	0	1	0	6
Bush, Steve	Ari	1	0	1	0	0	6
Campbell, Dan	Dal	1	0	1	0	0	6
Carter, Ki-Jana	NO	1	1	0	0	0	6
Chavous, Corey	Min	1	0	0	1	0	6
Cook, Jameel	TB	1	0	1	0	0	6
Dantzler, Woody	Atl	1	1	0	0	0	6
Delhomme, Jake	Car	1	1	0	0	0	6
Dilger, Ken	TB	1	0	1	0	0	6
Drummond, Eddie	Det	1	0	0	1	0	6
Dudley, Rickey	TB	1	0	1	0	0	6
Edwards, Mario	Dal	1	0	0	1	0	6
Godfrey, Randall	Sea	1	0	0	1	0	6
Goings, Nick	Car	1	0	1	0	0	6
Gordon, Lamar	StL	1	1	0	0	0	6
Harris, Al	GB	1	0	0	1	0	6
Harris, Corey	Det	1	0	0	1	0	6
Harris, Kwame	SF	1	0	0	1	0	6
Heller, Will	TB	1	0	1	0	0	6
Hill, Renaldo	Ari	1	0	0	1	0	6
Holmes, Kenny	NYG	1	0	0	1	0	6
Hoover, Brad	Car	1	0	1	0	0	6
Jacobs, Taylor	Was	1	0	1	0	0	6
Johnson, Bryant	Ari	1	0	1	0	0	6
Johnson, Doug	Atl	1	1	0	0	0	6
Johnson, Patrick	Was	1	0	1	0	0	6
Johnstone, Lance	Min	1	0	0	1	0	6
Kalu, N. D.	Phi	1	0	0	1	0	6
Lewis, Chad	Phi	1	0	1	0	0	6
Lewis, Michael	NO	1	0	1	0	0	6
Manning, Ricky	Car	1	0	0	1	0	6
Mathis, Kevin	Atl	1	0	0	1	0	6
McBride, Tod	Atl	1	0	0	1	0	6
McCown, Josh	Ari	1	1	0	0	0	6
McKenzie, Mike	GB	1	0	0	1	0	6
McQuarters, R.W.	Chi	1	0	0	1	0	6
Mitchell, Brian	NYG	1	1	0	0	0	6
Morris, Maurice	Sea	1	0	1	0	0	6
Nattiel, Michael	Min	1	0	0	1	0	6
Plummer, Ahmed	SF	1	0	0	1	0	6
Poole, Nate	Ari	1	0	1	0	0	6
Ramsey, Patrick	Was	1	1	0	0	0	6
Rodgers, Derrick	NO	1	0	0	1	0	6
Rossum, Allen	Atl	1	0	0	1	0	6
Scobey, Josh	Ari	1	0	0	1	0	6
Singleton, Alshermond	Dal	1	0	0	1	0	6
Smart, Rod	Car	1	0	0	1	0	6
Smith, L.J.	Phi	1	0	1	0	0	6
Stecker, Aaron	TB	1	0	1	0	0	6
Strong, Mack	Sea	1	1	0	0	0	6
Terrell, David	Chi	1	0	1	0	0	6
Thomas, Fred	NO	1	0	0	1	0	6
Thrash, James	Phi	1	0	1	0	0	6
Vick, Michael	Atl	1	1	0	0	0	6
Walker, Aaron	SF	1	0	1	0	0	6
Walker, Frank	NYG	1	0	0	1	0	6
Walls, Wesley	GB	1	0	1	0	0	6
Wansley, Tim	TB	1	0	0	1	0	6
Washington	NYG	1	0	0	1	0	6
Weaver, Jed	SF	1	0	1	0	0	6

RECORDS — RUSHING

Carries: 410, Jamal Anderson, Atlanta (1998)
Yards: 2,105, Eric Dickerson, L.A. Rams (1984)
Touchdowns: 25, Emmitt Smith, Dallas (1995)

51+ YARDS	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Green, Ahman	GB	355	1883	5.3	98t	15
McAllister, Deuce	NO	351	1641	4.7	76t	8

51+ YARDS	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Davis, Stephen	Car	318	1444	4.5	40	8
Alexander, Shaun	Sea	326	1435	4.4	55	14
Barber, Tiki	NYG	278	1216	4.4	27	2
Barlow, Kevan	SF	201	1024	5.1	78t	6
Thomas, Anthony	Chi	244	1024	4.2	67t	6
Hambrick, Troy	Dal	275	972	3.5	42	5
Shipp, Marcel	Ari	228	830	3.6	36	0
Faulk, Marshall	StL	209	818	3.9	52	10
Duckett, T.J.	Atl	197	779	4.0	55	11
Hearst, Garrison	SF	178	768	4.3	36	3
Pittman, Michael	TB	187	751	4.0	17	0
Williams, Moe	Min	174	745	4.3	61	5
Dunn, Warrick	Atl	125	672	5.4	69t	3
Jones, Thomas	TB	137	627	4.6	61	3
Westbrook, Brian	Phi	117	613	5.2	62t	7
Bryson, Shawn	Det	158	606	3.8	39	3
Canidate, Trung	Was	142	600	4.2	38	1
Smith, Onterrio	Min	107	579	5.4	47	5
Buckhalter, Correll	Phi	126	542	4.3	64t	8
Staley, Duce	Phi	96	463	4.8	22	5
Bennett, Michael	Min	90	447	5.0	28	1
Foster, DeShaun	Car	113	429	3.8	21	0
Culpepper, Daunte	Min	73	422	5.8	42	4
Davenport, Najeh	GB	77	420	5.5	76t	2
Cartwright, Rock	Was	107	411	3.8	22	4
Gary, Olandis	Det	113	384	3.4	27	2
McNabb, Donovan	Phi	71	355	5.0	34	3
Garcia, Jeff	SF	56	319	5.7	21t	7
Anderson, Richie	Dal	70	306	4.4	19	1
Gordon, Lamar	StL	71	298	4.2	20	1
Stewart, Kordell	Chi	59	290	4.9	25	3
Carter, Quincy	Dal	68	257	3.8	19	2
Smith, Emmitt	Ari	90	256	2.8	22	2
Betts, Ladell	Was	77	255	3.3	13t	2
Harris, Arlen	StL	85	255	3.0	18	4
Vick, Michael	Atl	40	255	6.4	43	1
Morris, Maurice	Sea	38	239	6.3	43	0
Cason, Aveion	Dal	40	220	5.5	63t	2
Morton, Chad	Was	48	216	4.5	27	0
Fisher, Tony	GB	40	200	5.0	19	1
Levens, Dorsey	NYG	68	197	2.9	17	3
Forsey, Brock	Chi	50	191	3.8	17	2
Blake, Jeff	Ari	30	177	5.9	19	2
Brooks, Aaron	NO	54	175	3.2	15	2
Strong, Mack	Sea	37	174	4.7	21t	1
Griffith, Justin	Atl	38	168	4.4	15	0
McCown, Josh	Ari	28	158	5.6	16t	1
Robertson, Jamal	SF	32	136	4.3	23	0
Hasselbeck, Matt	Sea	36	125	3.5	18	2
Stecker, Aaron	TB	37	125	3.4	15	0
Murrell, Adrian	Dal	28	107	3.8	17	0
Pinner, Artose	Det	39	99	2.5	12	0
Pritchett, Stanley	Chi	21	93	4.4	18	2
Harrington, Joey	Det	30	86	2.9	26	0
Alstott, Mike	TB	27	77	2.9	29	2
Bulger, Marc	StL	29	75	2.6	28	4
Carter, Ki-Jana	NO	19	72	3.8	31	1
Campbell, Kelly	Min	10	71	7.1	19	0
Peterson, Adrian	Chi	22	70	3.2	10	0
Goings, Nick	Car	10	69	6.9	17	0
Anderson, Damien	Ari	18	68	3.8	17	0
Ramsey, Patrick	Was	15	62	4.1	24	1
Smith, Lamar	NO	11	61	5.5	17	0
Bickerstaff, Erik	Dal	19	56	2.9	9	1
Glenn, Terry	Dal	3	55	18.3	47	0
Thrash, James	Phi	5	52	10.4	47	0
Driver, Donald	GB	5	51	10.2	45	0
Hakim, Az-Zahir	Det	3	51	17.0	35	0

RECORDS — RECEIVING

Receptions: 123, Herman Moore, Detroit (1995)
Yards: 1,848, Jerry Rice, San Francisco (1995)
Touchdowns: 22, Jerry Rice, San Francisco (1987)

16+ CATCHES	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Holt, Torry	StL	117	1696	14.5	48	12
Moss, Randy	Min	111	1632	14.7	72	17
Boldin, Anquan	Ari	101	1377	13.6	71t	8
Smith, Steve	Car	88	1110	12.6	67t	7
McCardell, Keenan	TB	84	1174	14.0	76t	8
Coles, Laveranues	Was	82	1204	14.7	64	6

AFC stats

17+ CATCHES	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Johnson, Andre	Hou	66	976	14.8	46t	4
Chambers, Chris	Mia	64	963	15.0	57t	11
Moulds, Eric	Buf	64	780	12.2	49	1
Rice, Jerry	Oak	63	869	13.8	47t	2
Sharpe, Shannon	Den	62	770	12.4	28	8
Northcutt, Dennis	Cle	62	729	11.8	44	2
Burress, Plaxico	Pit	60	860	14.3	47	4
Johnson, Kevin	Cle-Jac	58	634	10.9	41	3
Reed, Josh	Buf	58	588	10.1	26	2
Branch, Deion	NE	57	803	14.1	66t	3
Heap, Todd	Bal	57	693	12.2	33t	3
Kennison, Eddie	KC	56	853	15.2	51t	5
Shaw, Bobby	Buf	56	732	13.1	54t	4
Smith, Jimmy	Jac	54	805	14.9	67	4
Brown, Tim	Oak	52	567	10.9	36t	2
James, Edgerrin	Ind	51	292	5.7	17	0
Morton, Johnnie	KC	50	740	14.8	50	4
Williams, Ricky	Mia	50	351	7.0	59	1
McMichael, Randy	Mia	49	598	12.2	46	2
Faulk, Kevin	NE	48	440	9.2	27	0
Garner, Charlie	Oak	48	386	8.0	46t	1
Taylor, Fred	Jac	48	370	7.7	60t	1
McCareins, Justin	Ten	47	813	17.3	73	7
Sowell, Jerald	NYJ	47	436	9.3	44	1
Davis, Domanick	Hou	47	351	7.5	17	0
Conway, Curtis	NYJ	46	640	13.9	45	2
White, Jamel	Cle	46	303	6.6	22	1
Martin, Curtis	NYJ	42	262	6.2	29	0
Kinney, Erron	Ten	41	381	9.3	28	3
Davis, Andre	Cle	40	576	14.4	49	5
Pollard, Marcus	Ind	40	541	13.5	70	3
Brown, Troy	NE	40	472	11.8	82t	4
Hall, Dante	KC	40	423	10.6	67t	1
Becht, Anthony	NYJ	40	356	8.9	29	4
Miller, Billy	Hou	40	355	8.9	25	3
Zereoue, Amos	Pit	40	310	7.8	29	0
Taylor, Travis	Bal	39	632	16.2	73t	3
Morgan, Quincy	Cle	38	516	13.6	71t	3
Graham, Daniel	NE	38	409	10.8	38	4
Portis, Clinton	Den	38	314	8.3	72	0
Lelie, Ashley	Den	37	628	17.0	60	2
Randle El, Antwaan	Pit	37	364	9.8	32t	1
Walters, Troy	Ind	36	456	12.7	46t	3
Edwards, Troy	Jac	35	487	13.9	84t	3
Givens, David	NE	34	510	15.0	57	6
Gaffney, Jabar	Hou	34	402	11.8	33	2
Campbell, Mark	Buf	34	339	10.0	31	1
Bennett, Drew	Ten	32	504	15.8	48	4
Robinson, Marcus	Bal	31	451	14.5	50t	6
Jolley, Doug	Oak	31	250	8.1	26	1
Edwards, Marc	Jac	31	226	7.3	32	0
Clark, Dallas	Ind	29	340	11.7	42	1
Brady, Kyle	Jac	29	281	9.7	26	1
Porter, Jerry	Oak	28	361	12.9	35	1
Fauria, Christian	NE	28	285	10.2	28	2
Henry, Travis	Buf	28	158	5.6	18	1
Chrebet, Wayne	NYJ	27	289	10.7	29t	1
Thompson, Derrius	Mia	26	359	13.8	31	0
Lewis, Jamal	Bal	26	205	7.9	26	0
Bennett, Brandon	Cin	25	176	7.0	16	1
Bradford, Corey	Hou	24	460	19.2	78t	4
Gates, Antonio	SD	24	389	16.2	48	2
Schobel, Matt	Cin	24	332	13.8	45t	2
McKnight, James	Mia	23	285	12.4	80t	2
Washington, Kelley	Cin	22	299	13.6	51t	4
Stokley, Brandon	Ind	22	211	9.6	37t	3
George, Eddie	Ten	22	163	7.4	22	0
Williams, Ricky	Ind	22	157	7.1	17t	1
Stewart, Tony	Cin	21	212	10.1	21	0
Johnson, Rudi	Cin	21	146	7.0	17	0
Taylor, Chester	Bal	20	132	6.6	23	0
McCaffrey, Ed	Den	19	195	10.3	23	0
Jones, Terry	Bal	19	159	8.4	25	3
Holcombe, Robert	Ten	19	121	6.4	11	1
Centers, Larry	NE	19	106	5.6	14	1
Calico, Tyrone	Ten	18	297	16.5	45	4
Parker, Eric	SD	18	244	13.6	33t	3
Doering, Chris	Pit	18	240	13.3	53	1
Heiden, Steve	Cle	18	134	7.4	17	0
Hankton, Cortez	Jac	17	166	9.8	22	0

RECORDS — INTERCEPTIONS

Number: 13, Lester Hayes, Oakland (1980)
Return Yards: 349, Charlie McNeil, San Diego (1961)
Longest TD Return: 103 yards, Vencie Glenn, San Diego (1987); Louis Oliver, Miami (1992)
Touchdowns: 4, Ken Houston, Houston (1971); Jim Kearney, Kansas City (1972)

1+ INTERCEPTIONS	TEAM	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Reed, Ed	Bal	7	132	18.9	54t	1
Coleman, Marcus	Hou	7	95	13.6	41	0
Surtain, Patrick	Mia	7	59	8.4	32	0
Buchanon, Phillip	Oak	6	176	29.3	83t	2
Rolle, Samari	Ten	6	141	23.5	52	0
Law, Ty	NE	6	112	18.7	65t	1
Lewis, Ray	Bal	6	99	16.5	37	1
Poole, Tyrone	NE	6	81	13.5	44	0
Wesley, Greg	KC	6	63	10.5	27	0
Little, Earl	Cle	6	41	6.8	21	0
McCleon, Dexter	KC	6	-3	-0.5	0	0
Harper, Nick	Ind	4	121	30.3	75t	1
Alexander, Brent	Pit	4	63	15.8	34	0
Dyson, Andre	Ten	4	62	15.5	51t	2
James, Tory	Cin	4	56	14.0	31	0
Warfield, Eric	KC	4	39	9.8	20	0
Wilson, Eugene	NE	4	18	4.5	10	0
Jammer, Quentin	SD	4	6	1.5	6	0
Woods, Jerome	KC	3	125	41.7	79t	2
Knight, Sammy	Mia	3	98	32.7	70	0
McAlister, Chris	Bal	3	93	31.0	83t	1
Madison, Sam	Mia	3	82	27.3	36	1
Woodson, Charles	Oak	3	67	22.3	51	0
Beasley, Aaron	NYJ	3	64	21.3	39	0
Clements, Nate	Buf	3	54	18.0	54t	1
Scott, Chad	Pit	3	50	16.7	26t	1
Baxter, Gary	Bal	3	41	13.7	34	0
Bruschi, Tedy	NE	3	26	8.7	18t	2
Townsend, Deshea	Pit	3	24	8.0	25t	1
Thomas, Zach	Mia	3	21	7.0	19	0
Herndon, Kelly	Den	3	19	6.3	16	0
Peterson, Mike	Jac	3	8	2.7	7	0
Marion, Brock	Mia	3	3	1.0	3	0
Harrison, Rodney	NE	3	0	0.0	2	0
Wright, Kenny	Hou	3	-2	-0.7	0	0
Buckley, Terrell	Mia	2	75	37.5	74t	1
Boiman, Rocky	Ten	2	70	35.0	60t	1
Demps, Will	Bal	2	57	28.5	54	0
Samuel, Asante	NE	2	55	27.5	55t	1
Davis, Sammy	SD	2	48	24.0	41	0
Strickland, Donald	Ind	2	43	21.5	24	0
Harts, Shaunard	KC	2	39	19.5	39t	1
Carter, Tyrone	NYJ	2	37	18.5	23	0
Craft, Jason	Jac	2	29	14.5	21	0
Edwards, Donnie	SD	2	27	13.5	15	0
Calmus, Rocky	Ten	2	26	13.0	15	0
Nelson, Jim	Ind	2	22	11.0	12	0
Vrabel, Mike	NE	2	18	9.0	14	0
Woodson, Rod	Oak	2	18	9.0	13	0
Burris, Jeff	Cin	2	17	8.5	17	0
Gibson, Derrick	Oak	2	16	8.0	11	0
Mickens, Ray	NYJ	2	16	8.0	16	0
Ayodele, Akin	Jac	2	15	7.5	13	0
Kiel, Terrence	SD	2	15	7.5	15	0
Gold, Ian	Den	2	14	7.0	12t	1
Simmons, Brian	Cin	2	14	7.0	13	0
Beckett, Rogers	Cin	2	11	5.5	11	0
Bashir, Idrees	Ind	2	9	4.5	9	0
Bulluck, Keith	Ten	2	9	4.5	9	0
McGee, Terrence	Buf	2	5	2.5	3	0
Griffith, Robert	Cle	2	3	1.5	3	0
Thornton, David	Ind	2	3	1.5	2	0
Spikes, Takeo	Buf	2	1	0.5	1	0
Garnes, Sam	NYJ	2	0	0.0	0	0
Mathis, Rashean	Jac	2	0	0.0	0	0
Williams, Tank	Ten	2	0	0.0	0	0
McCree, Marlon	Hou	1	95	95.0	95t	1
McCutcheon, Daylon	Cle	1	75	75.0	75t	1
Bell, Kendrell	Pit	1	61	61.0	42	0
Williams, Chad	Bal	1	52	52.0	52t	1
Lassiter, Kwamie	SD	1	38	38.0	38t	1
Adams, Sam	Buf	1	37	37.0	37t	1
Morris, Aric	NE	1	33	33.0	33	0

RECORDS — KICK RETURNS

Number: 62, Andre Coleman, San Diego (1995); Brock Marion, Miami (1999)
Yards: 1,524, Brock Marion, Miami (1999)
Longest TD: 106 yards, Noland Smith, Kansas City (1967)
Touchdowns: 3, Raymond Clayborn, New England (1977)

16+ RETURNS	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Carter, Jonathan	NYJ	18	517	28.7	90t	1
Pyatt, Brad	Ind	19	544	28.6	90	0
Johnson, Bethel	NE	30	847	28.2	92t	1
Hall, Dante	KC	57	1478	25.9	100t	2
Rhodes, Dominic	Ind	16	411	25.7	49	0
Brightful, Lamont	Bal	29	716	24.7	75	0
Cole, Chris	Den	30	714	23.8	34	0
Moses, J.J.	Hou	58	1355	23.4	70	0
Johnson, Leon	SD	50	1151	23.0	60	0
Taylor, Ike	Pit	37	831	22.5	53	0
Gabriel, Doug	Oak	29	646	22.3	85t	1
Dwight, Tim	SD	22	488	22.2	32	0
Jenkins, Ronney	Oak	25	553	22.1	33	0
Brown, Antonio	Buf	48	1046	21.8	75	0
Bennett, Brandon	Cin	53	1146	21.6	46	0
Minor, Travis	Mia	34	727	21.4	49	0
Davis, Andre	Cle	38	803	21.1	69	0
Allen, David	Jac	41	831	20.3	61	0
Rogers, Charlie	Mia	19	383	20.2	33	0
Schifino, Jake	Ten	35	703	20.1	39	0
Fargas, Justin	Oak	16	315	19.7	32	0
Taylor, Chester	Bal	23	448	19.5	29	0
Randle El, Antwaan	Pit	24	466	19.4	34	0

RECORDS — PUNT RETURNS

Number: 62, Fulton Walker, Miami-L.A. Raiders (1985)
Yards: 692, Fulton Walker, Miami-L.A. Raiders (1985)
Longest: 98 yards, Terance Mathis, N.Y. Jets (1990)
Touchdowns: 4, Rick Upchurch, Denver (1976)

21+ RETURNS	TEAM	NO	FC	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Hall, Dante	KC	29	14	472	16.3	93t	2
Buchanon, Phillip	Oak	36	14	491	13.6	80t	2
Randle El, Antwaan	Pit	45	12	542	12.0	84t	2
Allen, David	Jac	27	15	324	12.0	52	0
McCareins, Justin	Ten	29	17	330	11.4	58t	1
Moss, Santana	NYJ	30	18	332	11.1	47	0
Warrick, Peter	Cin	25	8	273	10.9	68t	1
Brown, Troy	NE	29	13	293	10.1	23	0
O'Neal, Deltha	Den	33	10	315	9.5	57t	1
Parker, Eric	SD	23	2	207	9.0	49	0
Rogers, Charlie	Mia	21	13	186	8.9	48	0
Northcutt, Dennis	Cle	36	10	295	8.2	38	0
Brightful, Lamont	Bal	45	20	351	7.8	44	0
Johnson, Leon	SD	24	5	184	7.7	21	0
Moses, J.J.	Hou	36	7	244	6.8	40	0
Brown, Antonio	Buf	25	10	111	4.4	18	0

RECORDS — SACKS

Number: 22, Mark Gastineau, N.Y. Jets (1984)

5.0+ SACKS	TEAM	NO		TEAM	NO
Ogunleye, Adewale	Mia	15.0	Clemons, Duane	Cin	6.0
Taylor, Jason	Mia	13.0	Dingle, Adrian	SD	6.0
Ellis, Shaun	NYJ	12.5	Gildon, Jason	Pit	6.0
Suggs, Terrell	Bal	12.0	Thornton, John	Cin	6.0
Berry, Bert	Den	11.5	Washington, Marcus	Ind	6.0
Schobel, Aaron	Buf	11.5	Carter, Kevin	Ten	5.5
Freeney, Dwight	Ind	11.0	Coleman, Rod	Oak	5.5
Kearse, Jevon	Ten	9.5	Holliday, Vonnie	KC	5.5
Vrabel, Mike	NE	9.5	McGinest, Willie	NE	5.5
Boulware, Peter	Bal	8.5	Posey, Jeff	Buf	5.5
Hayward, Reggie	Den	8.5	Warren, Gerard	Cle	5.5
Pryce, Trevor	Den	8.5	Adams, Sam	Buf	5.0
Lang, Kenard	Cle	8.0	Barber, Shawn	KC	5.0
Seymour, Richard	NE	8.0	Bell, Kendrell	Pit	5.0
von Oelhoffen, Kimo	Pit	8.0	Davis, Andra	Cle	5.0
Scott, DeQuincy	SD	6.5	Hicks, Eric	KC	5.0
Abraham, John	NYJ	6.0	Porter, Joey	Pit	5.0
Brackens, Tony	Jac	6.0	Smith, Justin	Cin	5.0
Brown, Courtney	Cle	6.0	Truluck, R-Kal	KC	5.0

16+ CATCHES	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Owens, Terrell	SF	80	1102	13.8	75t	9
Horn, Joe	NO	78	973	12.5	50t	10
Pittman, Michael	TB	75	597	8.0	68t	2
Bruce, Isaac	StL	69	981	14.2	41	5
McAllister, Deuce	NO	69	516	7.5	39	0
Anderson, Richie	Dal	69	493	7.1	37	4
Barber, Tiki	NYG	69	461	6.7	36	1
Jackson, Darrell	Sea	68	1137	16.7	80t	9
Robinson, Koren	Sea	65	896	13.8	38t	4
Williams, Moe	Min	65	644	9.9	42	3
Price, Peerless	Atl	64	838	13.1	49	3
Toomer, Amani	NYG	63	1057	16.8	77t	5
Hilliard, Ike	NYG	60	608	10.1	38	6
Gardner, Rod	Was	59	600	10.2	35	5
Jones, Freddie	Ari	55	517	9.4	34	3
Muhammad, Muhsin	Car	54	837	15.5	60	3
Bryson, Shawn	Det	54	340	6.3	26	0
Glenn, Terry	Dal	52	754	14.5	51t	5
Booker, Marty	Chi	52	715	13.8	61t	4
Engram, Bobby	Sea	52	637	12.3	34t	6
Driver, Donald	GB	52	621	11.9	41	2
Green, Ahman	GB	50	367	7.3	27	5
White, Dez	Chi	49	583	11.9	49	3
Thrash, James	Phi	49	558	11.4	51	1
Hakim, Az-Zahir	Det	49	449	9.2	28	4
Shockey, Jeremy	NYG	48	535	11.1	46	2
Streets, Tai	SF	47	595	12.7	41t	7
Looker, Dane	StL	47	495	10.5	41	3
Mili, Itula	Sea	46	492	10.7	46t	4
Kleinsasser, Jimmy	Min	46	401	8.7	19	4
Johnson, Keyshawn	TB	45	600	13.3	39t	3
Faulk, Marshall	StL	45	290	6.4	30	1
Pathon, Jerome	NO	44	578	13.1	40	4
Crumpler, Alge	Atl	44	552	12.5	63	3
Clark, Desmond	Chi	44	433	9.8	31	2
Terrell, David	Chi	43	361	8.4	35	1
Alexander, Shaun	Sea	42	295	7.0	22	2
Walker, Javon	GB	41	716	17.5	66t	9
Williams, Boo	NO	41	436	10.6	31t	5
Bryant, Antonio	Dal	39	550	14.1	54	2
Ferguson, Robert	GB	38	520	13.7	47	4
Ricks, Mikhael	Det	37	434	11.7	38	2
Dunn, Warrick	Atl	37	336	9.1	86t	2
Westbrook, Brian	Phi	37	332	9.0	38	4
Pinkston, Todd	Phi	36	575	16.0	59	2
Schroeder, Bill	Det	36	397	11.0	26	2
Staley, Duce	Phi	36	382	10.6	52t	2
Mitchell, Freddie	Phi	35	498	14.2	39	2
Johnson, Bryant	Ari	35	438	12.5	54t	1
Weaver, Jed	SF	35	437	12.5	30	1
Wilson, Cedrick	SF	35	396	11.3	29	2
Witten, Jason	Dal	35	347	9.9	36t	1
Barlow, Kevan	SF	35	307	8.8	48	1
Galloway, Joey	Dal	34	672	19.8	64	2
Schlesinger, Cory	Det	34	247	7.3	33t	2
Lee, Charles	TB	33	432	13.1	72	2
Franks, Bubba	GB	30	241	8.0	24	4
Shipp, Marcel	Ari	30	184	6.1	34	0
Burleson, Nate	Min	29	455	15.7	52	2
Manumaleuna, Brandon	StL	29	238	8.2	39	2
Strong, Mack	Sea	29	216	7.4	32	0
Proehl, Ricky	Car	27	389	14.4	66t	4
McCants, Darnerien	Was	27	360	13.3	32t	6
Smith, L.J.	Phi	27	321	11.9	36	1
Finneran, Brian	Atl	26	368	14.2	38	2
Carter, Tim	NYG	26	309	11.9	30	0
Conwell, Ernie	NO	26	290	11.2	32	2
Foster, DeShaun	Car	26	207	8.0	47	2
Campbell, Kelly	Min	25	522	20.9	72t	4
Stallworth, Donte'	NO	25	485	19.4	76t	3
Hearst, Garrison	SF	25	211	8.4	26	1
Henderson, William	GB	24	214	8.9	22	3
Jones, Thomas	TB	24	180	7.5	29	0
Lewis, Chad	Phi	23	293	12.7	29	1
Fitzsimmons, Casey	Det	23	160	7.0	22	2
Dilger, Ken	TB	22	244	11.1	48	1
Rogers, Charles	Det	22	243	11	33t	3
Fisher, Tony	GB	21	206	9.8	32	2
Griffith, Justin	Atl	21	122	5.8	24	2
Walls, Wesley	GB	20	222	11.1	36	1
Campbell, Dan	Dal	20	195	9.8	23	1
Furrey, Mike	StL	20	189	9.5	24	0
Cook, Jameel	TB	20	120	6.0	19	1

16+ CATCHES	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Beasley, Fred	SF	19	184	9.7	32	1
Cartwright, Rock	Was	18	176	9.8	40	0
Pritchett, Stanley	Chi	18	83	4.6	20	0
Gage, Justin	Chi	17	338	19.9	57	2
Anderson, Scotty	Det	17	325	19.1	72t	2
Gilmore, Bryan	Ari	17	208	12.2	32	2
Mangum, Kris	Car	17	199	11.7	34	0
Rivers, Marcellus	NYG	17	155	9.1	27	0
Cason, Aveion	Dal	17	142	8.4	28	0
Hambrick, Troy	Dal	17	99	5.8	13	0
Ritchie, Jon	Phi	17	86	5.1	12	3
Tyree, David	NYG	16	211	13.2	48	0

RECORDS INTERCEPTIONS

Number: 14, Dick "Night Train" Lane, L.A. Rams (1952)
Return Yards: 303, Deion Sanders, San Francisco (1994)
Longest TD Return: 102 yards, Bob Smith, Detroit (1949); Eric Barnes, N.Y. Giants (1961)
Touchdowns: 4, Eric Allen, Philadelphia (1993)

2+ INTERCEPTIONS	TEAM	NO	YDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Parrish, Tony	SF	9	202	22.4	49	0
Russell, Brian	Min	9	185	20.6	50	0
Chavous, Corey	Min	8	143	17.9	39	1
Jackson, Dexter	Ari	6	122	20.3	30	0
Bly, Dre'	Det	6	89	14.8	48t	1
Williams, Brian	Min	5	205	41.0	77	1
Hill, Renaldo	Ari	5	119	23.8	70t	1
Sharper, Darren	GB	5	78	15.6	50	0
Smith, Dwight	TB	5	3	0.6	3	0
Fisher, Travis	StL	4	205	51.3	74t	2
McKenzie, Mike	GB	4	98	24.5	90t	1
Plummer, Ahmed	SF	4	85	21.3	68t	1
Williams, Aeneas	StL	4	82	20.5	46t	1
Butler, Jerametrius	StL	4	72	18.0	45	0
Thomas, Fred	NO	4	47	11.8	20	0
Azumah, Jerry	Chi	4	44	11.0	25	0
Smoot, Fred	Was	4	35	8.8	35	0
Polley, Tommy	StL	4	32	8.0	22	0
Tillman, Charles	Chi	4	27	6.8	32	0
Newman, Terence	Dal	4	23	5.8	25	0
Tongue, Reggie	Sea	4	11	2.8	10	0
Minter, Mike	Car	3	100	33.3	35t	2
Harris, Al	GB	3	89	29.7	56t	1
Ambrose, Ashley	NO	3	78	26.0	73t	1
Bolden, Juran	Atl	3	61	20.3	41t	1
Ohalete, Ifeanyi	Was	3	60	20.0	30	0
Tinoisamoa, Pisa	StL	3	46	15.3	29	0
Bowen, Matt	Was	3	44	14.7	44	0
McBride, Tod	Atl	3	44	14.7	25	1
Holt, Terrence	Det	3	42	14.0	30	0
Simmons, Anthony	Sea	3	38	12.7	33	0
Manning, Ricky	Car	3	33	11.0	27t	1
Lewis, Michael	Phi	3	31	10.3	23	0
Vincent, Troy	Phi	3	28	9.3	28	0
Grant, Deon	Car	3	25	8.3	25	0
Carpenter, Keion	Atl	3	22	7.3	14	0
Barnett, Nick	GB	3	21	7.0	14	0
Bellamy, Jay	NO	3	19	6.3	10	0
Rumph, Mike	SF	3	19	6.3	12	0
Walker, Frank	NYG	2	74	37.0	56t	1
McQuarters, R.W.	Chi	2	72	36.0	43	0
Williams, Roy	Dal	2	69	34.5	39	0
Wallace, Al	Car	2	58	29.0	53	0
Brooks, Derrick	TB	2	56	28.0	44t	1
Barber, Ronde	TB	2	53	26.5	29t	1
Brown, Ralph	NYG	2	51	25.5	29t	1
Singleton, Alshermond	Dal	2	42	21.0	41t	1
Wansley, Tim	TB	2	38	19.0	23t	1
Peterson, Julian	SF	2	31	15.5	31	0
Allen, Will	NYG	2	23	11.5	22	0
Terrell, David	Was	2	21	10.5	20	0
Trufant, Marcus	Sea	2	21	10.5	15	0
Lynch, John	TB	2	18	9.0	18	0
Diggs, Na'il	GB	2	13	6.5	13	0
Rice, Simeon	TB	2	12	6.0	12	0
Hawthorne, Michael	GB	2	8	4.0	8	0
Harris, Johnnie	NYG	2	3	1.5	3	0
Scott, Bryan	Atl	2	3	1.5	3	0
Bailey, Champ	Was	2	2	1.0	2	0
Howard, Reggie	Car	2	2	1.0	2	0
Bauman, Rashad	Was	2	1	0.5	1	0

RECORDS KICK RETURNS

Number: 82, MarTay Jenkins, Arizona (2000)
Yards: 2,186, MarTay Jenkins, Arizona (2000)
Longest TD: 106 yards, Al Carmichael, Green Bay (1956); Roy Green, St. Louis (1979)
Touchdowns: 4, Travis Williams, Green Bay (1967); Cecil Turner, Chicago (1970)

21+ RETURNS	TEAM	NO	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Azumah, Jerry	Chi	41	1191	29.0	89t	2
Bates, Michael	NYJ-Dal	26	686	26.4	48	0
Thrash, James	Phi	34	815	24.0	54	0
Swinton, Reggie	Dal-Det	43	1029	23.9	96t	1
Lewis, Michael	NO	45	1068	23.7	53	0
Morton, Chad	Was	44	1029	23.4	94t	1
Smart, Rod	Car	41	947	23.1	100t	1
Scobey, Josh	Ari	73	1684	23.1	100t	1
Harris, Arlen	StL	51	1175	23.0	42	0
Wilson, Cedrick	SF	37	836	22.6	95t	1
Chatman, Antonio	GB	36	804	22.3	46	0
Drummond, Eddie	Det	21	469	22.3	38	0
Smith, Onterrio	Min	27	588	21.8	46	0
Smith, Zuriel	Dal	23	495	21.5	54	0
Morris, Maurice	Sea	47	1007	21.4	56	0
Westbrook, Brian	Phi	23	487	21.2	47	0
Rossum, Allen	Atl	62	1291	20.8	52	0
Stecker, Aaron	TB	25	520	20.8	44	0

RECORDS PUNT RETURNS

Number: 70, Danny Reece, Tampa Bay (1979)
Yards: 875, Desmond Howard, Green Bay (1996)
Longest: 103, Robert Bailey, L.A. Rams (1994)
Touchdowns: 4, Jack Christansen, Detroit (1951)

15+ RETURNS	TEAM	NO	FC	YARDS	AVG	LONG	TD
Westbrook, Brian	Phi	20	16	306	15.3	84t	2
Rossum, Allen	Atl	39	11	545	14.0	72	1
Swinton, Reggie	Dal-Det	24	12	318	13.3	89t	1
McQuarters, R.W.	Chi	37	12	452	12.2	60t	1
Engram, Bobby	Sea	31	22	320	10.3	83t	1
Smith, Steve	Car	44	14	439	10.0	53t	1
Morton, Chad	Was	19	16	188	9.9	28	0
Lewis, Michael	NO	30	10	275	9.2	27	0
Galloway, Joey	Dal	20	8	178	8.9	36	0
Chatman, Antonio	GB	33	18	277	8.4	33	0
Williams, Karl	TB	15	10	110	7.3	19	0
Smith, Zuriel	Dal	30	13	212	7.1	46	0
Groce, DeJuan	StL	19	3	135	7.1	19	0
Howry, Keenan	Min	35	16	247	7.1	52	0
Williams, Jimmy	SF	35	10	240	6.9	20	0
Boldin, Anquan	Ari	20	12	130	6.5	19	0
Mitchell, Brian	NYG	29	14	154	5.3	15	0

RECORDS SACKS

Number: 22.5, Michael Strahan, N.Y. Giants (2001)

4.5+ SACKS	TEAM	NO		TEAM	NO
Strahan, Michael	NYG	18.5	Arrington, LaVar	Was	6.0
Rice, Simeon	TB	15.0	Jackson, Grady	NO-GB	6.0
Little, Leonard	StL	12.5	Walker, Darwin	Phi	6.0
Rucker, Mike	Car	12.0	Brown, Alex	Chi	5.5
Williams, Kevin	Min	10.5	Holmes, Kenny	NYG	5.5
Gbaja-Biamila, Kabeer	GB	10.0	Jackson, Tyoka	StL	5.5
Grant, Charles	NO	10.0	Kalu, N. D.	Phi	5.5
Johnstone, Lance	Min	10.0	Randle, John	Sea	5.5
Ellis, Greg	Dal	8.0	Whitehead, Willie	NO	5.5
Johnson, Ellis	Atl	8.0	Archuleta, Adam	StL	5.0
Okeafor, Chike	Sea	8.0	Glover, La'Roi	Dal	5.0
Simon, Corey	Phi	7.5	Hall, Travis	Atl	5.0
Wistrom, Grant	StL	7.5	Howard, Darren	NO	5.0
Brown, Chad	Sea	7.0	Jenkins, Kris	Car	5.0
Peppers, Julius	Car	7.0	Mixon, Kenny	Min	5.0
Peterson, Julian	SF	7.0	Sapp, Warren	TB	5.0
Armstead, Jessie	Was	6.5	Smith, Bruce	Was	5.0
Carter, Andre	SF	6.5	Wallace, Al	Car	5.0
Kerney, Patrick	Atl	6.5	Engelberger, John	SF	4.5

2003 SEASON RECAP

AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

East Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
New England	14	2	0	.875	348	238
Miami	10	6	0	.625	311	261
Buffalo	6	10	0	.375	243	279
N.Y. Jets	6	10	0	.375	283	299

North Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Baltimore	10	6	0	.625	391	281
Cincinnati	8	8	0	.500	346	384
Pittsburgh	6	10	0	.375	300	327
Cleveland	5	11	0	.312	254	322

South Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Indianapolis	12	4	0	.750	447	336
Tennessee*	12	4	0	.750	435	324
Jacksonville	5	11	0	.312	276	331
Houston	5	11	0	.312	255	380

West Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Kansas City	13	3	0	.812	484	332
Denver*	10	6	0	.625	381	301
Oakland	4	12	0	.250	270	379
San Diego	4	12	0	.250	313	441

NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE

East Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Philadelphia	12	4	0	.750	374	287
Dallas*	10	6	0	.625	289	260
Washington	5	11	0	.312	287	372
N.Y. Giants	4	12	0	.250	243	387

North Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Green Bay	10	6	0	.625	442	307
Minnesota	9	7	0	.562	416	353
Chicago	7	9	0	.438	283	346
Detroit	5	11	0	.312	270	379

South Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
Carolina	11	5	0	.688	325	304
New Orleans	8	8	0	.500	340	326
Tampa Bay	7	9	0	.438	301	264
Atlanta	5	11	0	.312	299	422

West Division

	W	L	T	PCT	PF	PA
St. Louis	12	4	0	.750	447	328
Seattle*	10	6	0	.625	404	327
San Francisco	7	9	0	.438	384	337
Arizona	4	12	0	.250	225	452

* wild card

SUPER BOWL XXXVIII

At Reliant Stadium, Houston, February 1, 2004
Attendance: 71,525

Carolina	0	10	0	19	—	29
New England	0	14	0	18	—	32

SCORING

	QTR	Time	
NE	2	3:05	Branch 5 yd. pass from Brady (Vinatieri kick)
Car	2	1:07	S. Smith 39 yd. pass from Delhomme (Kasay kick)
NE	2	0:18	Givens 5 yd. pass from Brady (Vinatieri kick)
Car	2	0:00	Kasay 50 yd. field goal
NE	4	14:49	A. Smith 2 yd. run (Vinatieri kick)
Car	4	12:39	Foster 33 yd. run (pass failed)
Car	4	6:53	Muhammad 85 yd. pass from Delhomme (pass failed)
NE	4	2:51	Vrabel 1 yd. pass from Brady (Faulk run for 2 pt. conversion)
Car	4	1:08	Proehl 12 yd. pass from Delhomme (Kasay kick)
NE	4	0:04	Vinatieri 41 yd. field goal

TEAM STATISTICS

	Carolina	NE
Rushing Yards	3	7
Passing Yards	12	19
Total Net Yards	387	481
1st Downs	17	29
Sacked-Yards Lost	4-28	0-0
3rd-Down Conversions	4-12	8-17
4th-Down Conversions	0-0	1-1
Time Of Pos.	21:02	38:58

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING:
Carolina—Davis 13-49, Foster 3-43-1;
New England—A. Smith 26-83-1, Faulk 6-42, Brady 2-12

PASSING:
Carolina—Delhomme 16-23-323-3 TD-0 INT;
New England—Brady 32-48-354-3 TD-1 INT

RECEIVING:
Carolina—Muhammad 4-140-TD, Smith 4-80-TD, Proehl 4-71-TD, Wiggins 2-21, Foster 1-9, Mangum 1-2;
New England—Branch 10-143-TD, T. Brown 8-76, Givens 5-69-TD, Graham 4-46, Faulk 4-19, Vrabel 1-1-TD

SACKS:
New England—Vrabel 2, Harrison 1, McGinest 1

WILD CARD GAMES

Tennessee 20
BALTIMORE 17

Denver 10
INDIANAPOLIS 41

Dallas 10
CAROLINA 29

Seattle 27 (OT)
GREEN BAY 33

DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS

Tennessee 14
NEW ENGLAND 17

Kansas City 31
INDIANAPOLIS 38

Carolina 29 (2OT)
ST. LOUIS 23

Green Bay 17 (OT)
PHILADELPHIA 20

CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

NEW ENGLAND 24
Indianapolis 14

Carolina 14
PHILADELPHIA 3

SUPER BOWL XXXVIII

New England 32
Carolina 29

home team in caps

SUPER BOWLS

1967	Green Bay 35, Kansas City 10
1968	Green Bay 33, Oakland 14
1969	New York Jets 16, Baltimore 7
1970	Kansas City 23, Minnesota 7
1971	Baltimore 16, Dallas 13
1972	Dallas 24, Miami 3
1973	Miami 14, Washington 7
1974	Miami 24, Minnesota 7
1975	Pittsburgh 16, Minnesota 6
1976	Pittsburgh 21, Dallas 17
1977	Oakland 32, Minnesota 14
1978	Dallas 27, Denver 10
1979	Pittsburgh 35, Dallas 31
1980	Pittsburgh 31, Los Angeles Rams 19
1981	Oakland 27, Philadelphia 10
1982	San Francisco 26, Cincinnati 21
1983	Washington 27, Miami 17
1984	Los Angeles Raiders 38, Washington 9
1985	San Francisco 38, Miami 16
1986	Chicago 46, New England 10
1987	New York Giants 39, Denver 20
1988	Washington 42, Denver 10
1989	San Francisco 20, Cincinnati 16
1990	San Francisco 55, Denver 10
1991	New York Giants 20, Buffalo 19
1992	Washington 37, Buffalo 24
1993	Dallas 52, Buffalo 17
1994	Dallas 30, Buffalo 13
1995	San Francisco 49, San Diego 26
1996	Dallas 27, Pittsburgh 17
1997	Green Bay 35, New England 21
1998	Denver 31, Green Bay 24
1999	Denver 34, Atlanta 19
2000	St. Louis 23, Tennessee 16
2001	Baltimore 34, New York Giants 7
2002	New England 20, St. Louis 17
2003	Tampa Bay 48, Oakland 21
2004	New England 32, Carolina 29

SUPER BOWL MVP

1967	Bart Starr, Green Bay Packers
1968	Bart Starr, Green Bay Packers
1969	Joe Namath, New York Jets
1970	Len Dawson, Kansas City Chiefs
1971	Chuck Howley, Dallas Cowboys
1972	Roger Staubach, Dallas Cowboys
1973	Jake Scott, Miami Dolphins
1974	Larry Csonka, Miami Dolphins
1975	Franco Harris, Pittsburgh Steelers
1976	Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh Steelers
1977	Fred Biletnikoff, Oakland Raiders
1978	Randy White and Harvey Martin, Dallas Cowboys
1979	Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh Steelers
1980	Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh Steelers
1981	Jim Plunkett, Oakland Raiders
1982	Joe Montana, San Francisco 49ers
1983	John Riggins, Washington Redskins
1984	Marcus Allen, Los Angeles Raiders
1985	Joe Montana, San Francisco 49ers
1986	Richard Dent, Chicago Bears
1987	Phil Simms, New York Giants
1988	Doug Williams, Washington Redskins
1989	Jerry Rice, San Francisco 49ers
1990	Joe Montana, San Francisco 49ers
1991	Ottis Anderson, New York Giants
1992	Mark Rypien, Washington Redskins
1993	Troy Aikman, Dallas Cowboys
1994	Emmitt Smith, Dallas Cowboys
1995	Steve Young, San Francisco 49ers
1996	Larry Brown, Dallas Cowboys
1997	Desmond Howard, Green Bay Packers
1998	Terrell Davis, Denver Broncos
1999	John Elway, Denver Broncos
2000	Kurt Warner, St. Louis Rams
2001	Ray Lewis, Baltimore Ravens
2002	Tom Brady, New England Patriots
2003	Dexter Jackson, Tampa Bay Buccaneers
2004	Tom Brady, New England Patriots

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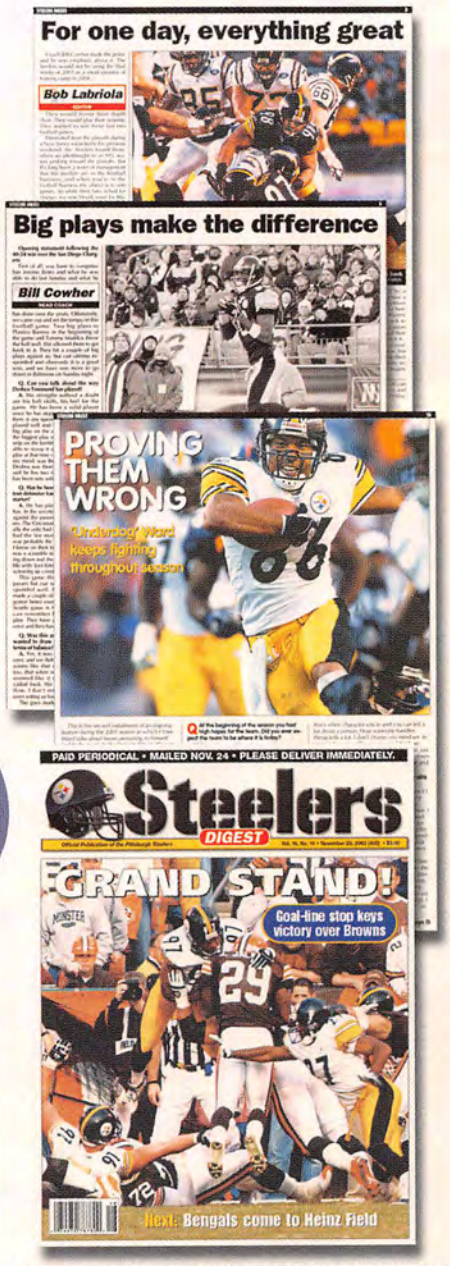
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SS04

2004 NFL WEEKLY SCHEDULE

All times Eastern / Preseason game times subject to change

TELEVISED PRESEASON GAMES

Monday, Aug. 9		
Hall of Fame Game *(Canton, Ohio)*		
Denver vs. Washington	8:00	ABC
Thursday, Aug. 12		
Atlanta at Baltimore	8:00	ESPN
Monday, Aug. 16		
Seattle at Green Bay	8:00	ESPN
Thursday, Aug. 19		
N.Y. Giants at Carolina	8:00	FOX
Friday, Aug. 20		
Baltimore at Philadelphia	8:00	CBS
Saturday, Aug. 21		
N.Y. Jets at Indianapolis	8:00	ESPN
Monday, Aug. 23		
St. Louis at Kansas City	8:00	ABC
Thursday, Aug. 26		
Pittsburgh at Philadelphia	8:00	ESPN
Friday, Aug. 27		
Washington at St. Louis	8:00	FOX
Saturday, Aug. 28		
New England at Carolina	8:00	CBS
Monday, Aug. 30		
Tennessee at Dallas	8:00	ABC

REGULAR SEASON GAMES

WEEK 1

Thursday, Sept. 9	
Indianapolis at New England	9:00
Sunday, Sept. 12	
Jacksonville at Buffalo	1:00
Detroit at Chicago	1:00
Baltimore at Cleveland	1:00
San Diego at Houston	1:00
Tennessee at Miami	1:00
Seattle at New Orleans	1:00
Cincinnati at N.Y. Jets	1:00
Oakland at Pittsburgh	1:00
Arizona at St. Louis	1:00
Tampa Bay at Washington	1:00
Dallas at Minnesota	4:15
N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia	4:15
Atlanta at San Francisco	4:15
Kansas City at Denver	8:30
Monday, Sept. 13	
Green Bay at Carolina	9:00

WEEK 2

Sunday, Sept. 19	
St. Louis at Atlanta	1:00
Pittsburgh at Baltimore	1:00
Houston at Detroit	1:00
Chicago at Green Bay	1:00
Denver at Jacksonville	1:00
Carolina at Kansas City	1:00
San Francisco at New Orleans	1:00
Washington at N.Y. Giants	1:00
Indianapolis at Tennessee	1:00
Seattle at Tampa Bay	4:05
New England at Arizona	4:15
Cleveland at Dallas	4:15
Buffalo at Oakland	4:15
N.Y. Jets at San Diego	4:15
Miami at Cincinnati	8:30
Monday, Sept. 20	
Minnesota at Philadelphia	9:00

WEEK 3

(Open date: Buffalo, Carolina, New England, N.Y. Jets)

Sunday, Sept. 26	
Arizona at Atlanta	1:00
Baltimore at Cincinnati	1:00
Philadelphia at Detroit	1:00
Houston at Kansas City	1:00
Pittsburgh at Miami	1:00
Chicago at Minnesota	1:00
Cleveland at N.Y. Giants	1:00
New Orleans at St. Louis	1:00
Jacksonville at Tennessee	1:00
San Diego at Denver	4:05
Green Bay at Indianapolis	4:15
San Francisco at Seattle	4:15
Tampa Bay at Oakland	8:30
Monday, Sept. 27	
Dallas at Washington	9:00

WEEK 4

(Open date: Dallas, Detroit, Minnesota, Seattle)

Sunday, Oct. 3	
New England at Buffalo	1:00
Philadelphia at Chicago	1:00
Washington at Cleveland	1:00
N.Y. Giants at Green Bay	1:00
Oakland at Houston	1:00
Indianapolis at Jacksonville	1:00
Cincinnati at Pittsburgh	1:00
New Orleans at Arizona	4:05
Atlanta at Carolina	4:05
N.Y. Jets at Miami	4:15
Tennessee at San Diego	4:15
Denver at Tampa Bay	4:15
St. Louis at San Francisco	8:30
Monday, Oct. 4	
Kansas City at Baltimore	9:00

WEEK 5

(Open date: Chicago, Cincinnati, Kansas City, Philadelphia)

Sunday, Oct. 10	
Detroit at Atlanta	1:00
N.Y. Giants at Dallas	1:00
Minnesota at Houston	1:00
Oakland at Indianapolis	1:00
Miami at New England	1:00
Tampa Bay at New Orleans	1:00
Cleveland at Pittsburgh	1:00
Buffalo at N.Y. Jets	4:05
Jacksonville at San Diego	4:05
Carolina at Denver	4:15
Arizona at San Francisco	4:15
St. Louis at Seattle	4:15
Baltimore at Washington	8:30
Monday, Oct. 11	
Tennessee at Green Bay	9:00

WEEK 6

(Open date: Arizona, Baltimore, Indianapolis, N.Y. Giants)

Sunday, Oct. 17	
San Diego at Atlanta	1:00
Miami at Buffalo	1:00
Washington at Chicago	1:00
Cincinnati at Cleveland	1:00
Green Bay at Detroit	1:00
Kansas City at Jacksonville	1:00
Seattle at New England	1:00
San Francisco at N.Y. Jets	1:00
Carolina at Philadelphia	1:00
Houston at Tennessee	1:00
Pittsburgh at Dallas	4:15
Denver at Oakland	4:15
Minnesota at New Orleans	8:30
Monday, Oct. 18	
Tampa Bay at St. Louis	9:00

WEEK 7

(Open date: Houston, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Washington)

Sunday, Oct. 24	
Buffalo at Baltimore	1:00
San Diego at Carolina	1:00
Philadelphia at Cleveland	1:00
Jacksonville at Indianapolis	1:00
Atlanta at Kansas City	1:00
St. Louis at Miami	1:00
Tennessee at Minnesota	1:00
Detroit at N.Y. Giants	1:00
Chicago at Tampa Bay	1:00
N.Y. Jets at New England	4:05
Seattle at Arizona	4:15
Dallas at Green Bay	4:15
New Orleans at Oakland	4:15
Monday, Oct. 25	
Denver at Cincinnati	9:00

WEEK 8

(Open date: Cleveland, New Orleans, St. Louis, Tampa Bay)

Sunday, Oct. 31	
Arizona at Buffalo	1:00
Detroit at Dallas	1:00
Jacksonville at Houston	1:00
Indianapolis at Kansas City	1:00
N.Y. Giants at Minnesota	1:00
Baltimore at Philadelphia	1:00
Cincinnati at Tennessee	1:00
Green Bay at Washington	1:00
Atlanta at Denver	4:05
Carolina at Seattle	4:05
New England at Pittsburgh	4:15
Oakland at San Diego	4:15
San Francisco at Chicago	8:30
Monday, Nov. 1	
Miami at N.Y. Jets	9:00

WEEK 9

(Open date: Atlanta, Jacksonville, Green Bay, Tennessee)

Sunday, Nov. 7	
N.Y. Jets at Buffalo	1:00
Oakland at Carolina	1:00
Dallas at Cincinnati	1:00
Washington at Detroit	1:00
Arizona at Miami	1:00
Philadelphia at Pittsburgh	1:00
Kansas City at Tampa Bay	1:00
Chicago at N.Y. Giants	4:05
New Orleans at San Diego	4:05
Seattle at San Francisco	4:05
Houston at Denver	4:15
New England at St. Louis	4:15
Cleveland at Baltimore	8:30
Monday, Nov. 8	
Minnesota at Indianapolis	9:00

WEEK 10

(Open date: Denver, Miami, Oakland, San Diego)

Sunday, Nov. 14	
Tampa Bay at Atlanta	1:00
Pittsburgh at Cleveland	1:00
Houston at Indianapolis	1:00
Detroit at Jacksonville	1:00
Kansas City at New Orleans	1:00
Baltimore at N.Y. Jets	1:00
Seattle at St. Louis	1:00
Chicago at Tennessee	1:00
Cincinnati at Washington	4:05
N.Y. Giants at Arizona	4:15
Minnesota at Green Bay	4:15
Carolina at San Francisco	4:15
Buffalo at New England	8:30
Monday, Nov. 15	
Philadelphia at Dallas	9:00

WEEK 11

Sunday, Nov. 21	
Dallas at Baltimore	1:00
St. Louis at Buffalo	1:00
Arizona at Carolina	1:00
Indianapolis at Chicago	1:00
Pittsburgh at Cincinnati	1:00
N.Y. Jets at Cleveland	1:00
Tennessee at Jacksonville	1:00
Detroit at Minnesota	1:00
Denver at New Orleans	1:00
San Francisco at Tampa Bay	1:00
San Diego at Oakland	4:05
Miami at Seattle	4:05
Atlanta at N.Y. Giants	4:15
Washington at Philadelphia	4:15
Green Bay at Houston	8:30
Monday, Nov. 22	
New England at Kansas City	9:00

WEEK 12

Thursday, Nov. 25	
Indianapolis at Detroit	12:30
Chicago at Dallas	4:15
Sunday, Nov. 28	
Tampa Bay at Carolina	1:00
Cleveland at Cincinnati	1:00
Tennessee at Houston	1:00
San Diego at Kansas City	1:00
Jacksonville at Minnesota	1:00
Baltimore at New England	1:00
Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants	1:00
Washington at Pittsburgh	1:00
New Orleans at Atlanta	4:05
N.Y. Jets at Arizona	4:15
Miami at San Francisco	4:15
Buffalo at Seattle	4:15
Oakland at Denver	8:30
Monday, Nov. 29	
St. Louis at Green Bay	9:00

WEEK 13

Sunday, Dec. 5	
Cincinnati at Baltimore	1:00
Minnesota at Chicago	1:00
New England at Cleveland	1:00
Arizona at Detroit	1:00
Tennessee at Indianapolis	1:00
Buffalo at Miami	1:00
Carolina at New Orleans	1:00
Houston at N.Y. Jets	1:00
San Francisco at St. Louis	1:00
Atlanta at Tampa Bay	1:00
Kansas City at Oakland	4:05
Denver at San Diego	4:05
Green Bay at Philadelphia	4:15
N.Y. Giants at Washington	4:15
Pittsburgh at Jacksonville	8:30
Monday, Dec. 6	
Dallas at Seattle	9:00

WEEK 14

Sunday, Dec. 12	
Oakland at Atlanta	1:00
N.Y. Giants at Baltimore	1:00
Cleveland at Buffalo	1:00
New Orleans at Dallas	1:00
Detroit at Green Bay	1:00
Indianapolis at Houston	1:00
Chicago at Jacksonville	1:00
Seattle at Minnesota	1:00
Cincinnati at New England	1:00
Miami at Denver	4:05
N.Y. Jets at Pittsburgh	4:05
San Francisco at Arizona	4:15
St. Louis at Carolina	4:15
Tampa Bay at San Diego	4:15
Philadelphia at Washington	8:30
Monday, Dec. 13	
Kansas City at Tennessee	9:00

WEEK 15

Saturday, Dec. 18	
Pittsburgh at N.Y. Giants	1:30
Washington at San Francisco	5:00
Carolina at Atlanta	8:30
Sunday, Dec. 19	
Houston at Chicago	1:00
Buffalo at Cincinnati	1:00
Jacksonville at Green Bay	1:00
Minnesota at Detroit	1:00
San Diego at Cleveland	1:00
Seattle at N.Y. Jets	1:00
Dallas at Philadelphia	1:00
St. Louis at Arizona	4:05
New Orleans at Tampa Bay	4:05
Denver at Kansas City	4:15
Tennessee at Oakland	4:15
Baltimore at Indianapolis	8:30
Monday, Dec. 20	
New England at Miami	9:00

WEEK 16

Friday, Dec. 24	
Green Bay at Minnesota	3:00
Saturday, Dec. 25	
Oakland at Kansas City	5:00
Denver at Tennessee	8:30
Sunday, Dec. 26	
N.Y. Giants at Cincinnati	1:00
Chicago at Detroit	1:00
San Diego at Indianapolis	1:00
Houston at Jacksonville	1:00
Atlanta at New Orleans	1:00
Baltimore at Pittsburgh	1:00
Carolina at Tampa Bay	1:00
New England at N.Y. Jets	4:05
Buffalo at San Francisco	4:05
Washington at Dallas	4:15
Arizona at Seattle	4:15
Cleveland at Miami	8:30
Monday, Dec. 27	
Philadelphia at St. Louis	9:00

WEEK 17

Sunday, Jan. 2	
Miami at Baltimore	1:00
Pittsburgh at Buffalo	1:00
New Orleans at Carolina	1:00
Green Bay at Chicago	1:00
Cleveland at Houston	1:00
San Francisco at New England	1:00
Cincinnati at Philadelphia	1:00
N.Y. Jets at St. Louis	1:00
Detroit at Tennessee	1:00
Minnesota at Washington	1:00
Tampa Bay at Arizona	4:05
Atlanta at Seattle	4:05
Indianapolis at Denver	4:15
Jacksonville at Oakland	4:15
Kansas City at San Diego	4:15
Dallas at N.Y. Giants	8:30

POSTSEASON GAMES

Wild Card Games
Sat.-Sun., Jan. 8-9, 2005

Divisional Playoffs
Sat.-Sun., Jan. 15-16, 2005

Conference Championships
Sunday, Jan. 23, 2005

Super Bowl XXXIX
Alltel Stadium, Jacksonville
Sunday, Feb. 6, 2005

AFC-NFC Pro Bowl
Aloha Stadium, Honolulu
Sunday, Feb. 13, 2005

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